

CANADA'S

WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

Maclean's

OCTOBER 28, 1996

Cashing Out

Why Thousands
of Canadians
Are Leaving the
Fast Lane Behind

Elizabeth and Charles Long,
Rideau Ferry, Ont.

\$3.50



From The Editor

The Grits get in gear

A Candidate returning home from overseas or back to work last week could have been forgiven for thinking an election had been called. There was Reform party Leader Preston Manning riding the buses—and the Grits—announcing a new policy turn, tax cuts to slash deficits and boost economies (page 16). There was NDP Leader Alexa McDonough railing against the dollar sliding and urging that the only viable bridge off in Canada these days are corporate fat cats. And there was Jean Chretien coqueting up valises—a myth, really—at meetings with street people and vowing to keep cutting the deficit, not taxes.

Chretien again has walked that his electoral benchmarking was for real, given all the good economic news last week—exports up, the dollar sliding and foreign investors lifting us over with Canada (page 24). Despite high unemployment, the polls indicate that Chretien continues to enjoy a commanding lead at the present time, while Manning and his Reform party limp along there just ahead of the last-place NDP.

During a visit to British Columbia last week, Chretien even managed to kiss and make up with Premier Glen Clark, a sign aided by the popular attack on the fairs of federal money for infrastructure projects. This week, the Prime Minister was doing some of the same in Montreal, heading out groceries to socialist, environmentalist, feminist, and other left-leaning friends. He was also in the big Quebec market on the economy.

There is nothing like watching the Grits when they are getting ready to go to the people. Never are they so humble, never so willing to please. They launch the continuous reform signs, are around, knock around Jean Boyle and Delmore Munroe (David Collette), or try to "harmonize" the GST. And then there are those messy public arguments on heated blood and Bonfire. Is it a mere coincidence that Liberal ministers lately have been publicly denouncing that back environmental consciousness coincide their



work by April? Would Chretien be planning a spring campaign? Are the Liberals the central governing party of Canada?

And yet, Chretien leaves enough not to count the votes before the election plot is fully hatched. It was a point that Lloyd Axworthy the foreign affairs minister underlined during a visit to Montreal last week. Axworthy acknowledged that the combined opposition "doesn't seem up to a very strong national challenge." But the senior minister for Manitoba, with 14 seats, is taking nothing for granted. "It's going by inches," he said. "Of the 12 seats we hold, we probably have a good base of five or six of them. In parts of Winnipeg the NDP which has come up a little bit in its traditional support, with challenges in some of these seats. In the rural seats, as two or three cases it will be Reform, in other cases, the Conservatives."

The reason for the NDP improvement, for axels, is that "the anti-McDonough fervor has dissipated" and people are returning to their traditional beliefs, rather than voting they had to go to to drive the Conservatives from office. But Axworthy argues that Tory Leader Jean Chretien's decision to come out against the Supreme Court reference, in which Ottawa seeks to challenge the seven empty seats of the Parti Quebecois, was "a big mistake as parts of English Canada, which could hurt the chances that the strength of local candidates in rural areas." It could come down to the fact that, if the local mayor decides he will vote Reform, that's the person that part of the electorate will choose around.

In the end, of course, the political leaders will play a major role in shaping the outcome. The stark goals at the campaign to come last week seemed sharp policy constraints and enough subtle to ward the appetite of political jitters. The real thing should be a beauty to behold.

Robert Lewis



McDonough, getting off the treadmill

Newsroom Notes:

A new twist

For many, stories about downsizing in the corporate and government realm have become routine. But in recent months, there seems to be a new twist: people are increasingly talking of downsizing their personal lives. Downsizing isn't only about referring to it as voluntary simplicity as they choose to cut back. It's also about

leave little time for friends or families. By any name, it is the subject of this week's cover story by Senior Writer Marc McDonald, which was edited by Assistant Managing Editor Ann Downard Johnston and designed by Art Director Nick Barrett.

For many, the process begins involuntarily, provoked by layoffs. Still, they appear to welcome the chance to get off the treadmill.

"Even if you're a doctor, a lawyer, a wealthy person, you're talking about downsizing," says McDonald. "There's a whole rethinking of priorities and values."

Although the movement began in the United States, McDonald found that its Canadian leaders—many of whom sat for the covers of Photo Editor Peter Briggs—have devised unique solutions. Among them: a worldwide barter system that began, so Coensteyn, B.C. Says McDonald: "There is tremendous hope in the fact that people have chosen not to invent what is being lost, but to try to come up with a more creative way to live."

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Chrétien: Arguing clearly that we truly have government of, by and for the EDOs

Power politics

Your story on "The power game," (Cover, Oct. 14) was very illuminating. It explains many of the fits that pervade Canadian society. Looking over your list of who has access to power, it becomes frighteningly clear that we truly have government of, by and for the EDOs. Notably absent from among those whose views are heard: scientists, educators and artists. This explains why, despite having one of the lowest levels of per capita funding for research in the developed world, our leaders cut a further 10 to 15 per cent from scientific granting councils. As a result, the brain drains continue. Young scientists leave, not for greener pastures, but because they are being driven, uninvited, from their own land. It also explains brutal cuts to education, and government pressure to make universities into mere corporate training centres. *Alison Huxley* might—no many alphas are not a good thing. Finally, it ex-

plains why, in a vast country struggling to be democratic and explain itself, our communication and transportation links are abused and our arts are allowed to wither: so, following precedent who have to strain beyond the last straw line, we are becoming the perfect corporate society—barren, beardless, soulless drones, leaving road and building water for the multinational business elite, until there is no more wood and no more water.

Steven C. Smith
Milton, ON

There is one element missing in "Who's up and who's down in Jean Chrétien's Ottawa"—the lobsters and gentlemen of the media. On the other hand, it may be very dangerous—and not in the least diplomatic—to profess

Laurence L. LaFrenie
Ottawa

Avoid the "Undercurrent" we find Penny Collette, who, guided the blurb "Shows how to make Chrétien laugh." Great! Just what the country needs—a clown jester.

Donald J. Christie
Port Hope, Ont.

Security strike

After reading "Showdown at GMP" (Business, Oct. 14), I felt that the implication of the article was that of condemning Canadian Automobiles president Buzz Hargrove and his subsidiaries. Economist Sherry Cuper of Northrup Inc. clearly states that this article will hamper the rebounding economy thanks to the CAA. His reasoning (work and jobs goes unchallenged, the slowing down of the economy will pale in comparison to the devastating effect this action will have on the community, premier and, indeed, the country. Thank God a dynamic leader like Hargrove and his negotiating committee fought for a more secure future for all workers.

Lois Fitchek
Sellye, N.S.

Quebec's strike vote

Anthony Wilson-Smith ("Flawed as a proposition: Bureaucracy lived for politics," Backstage, Ottawa, Oct. 14) relates Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard's campaign of a referendum. You vote to a strike mandate for a union to negotiate for a better deal. It is a pity that he has yet to come to the realization that when the demands being made are too unreasonable the result is that the company

Future in context

The excerpt from Angus Reid's new book *Showdown: How the New Economy is Changing Our Lives, and Reshaping Reality* ("Where have all the buyers gone?," The Nation's Edge, Oct. 14). The federal Liberals, preparing us for an election in the near future, are suddenly tripping over themselves with assurances to Canadians that all is well, just re-direct us. Union leadership is oblivious to the forces of the market and the need for profits to pay back the investors without whom no business can function. Renewed urban demands only exacerbate the current difficulties. Even big business needs to be more aware of the fact that every time they scale back, close down or relocate to other jurisdictions, they too contribute to the economic vicious circle. As Reid says, it is all Economics 101, but he puts it in a much easier-to-understand context. The future does look dim, but it is better to understand it than to ignore it.

John J. MacIntyre
Toronto, Ont.

slightly goes out of business, and there is no deal at all. In any case, Bouchard's "union" already has a considerably better deal than those of any other "unions" in the shop and we'd all be better off if he chose the route of co-operation instead of confrontation.

Glen Healy
Calgary, AB

Peanut allergies

As the parent of a child with a peanut allergy, I find it appalling that some parents would give convenience a higher priority than the life of a child ("Caught in a jam over peanut butter," *Quebec News*, Oct. 7). Having peanut products from the schools will not make children needlessly fearful of the world around them. It should teach tolerance and consideration of others' differences and hopefully impress upon them that their own convenience or likes can never be deemed more important than the life of another.

Patricia J. Moore
Northam, Ont. 2L

The problem of work

Peter C. Newman's exposition of the ideas of philosopher Friedrich Bergson ("A philosopher's dream of making work fun," *The Nation's Edge*, Oct. 7) was an interesting exploration of one alternative to

"It seems like everybody's talking about price, when what really matters is value."

Kevin Stangland, Roy Hanson CRR (Hewlett-Packard Inc.)



The business.

The challenge.

The solution.

The results.

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STRENGTH OF EXPERIENCE

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the one or/under whose dilemma that we society faces. It should be noted, however, that many others have advocated similar solutions in the past, solutions that reveal some very important social and economic problems that Biergreen has ignored. While corporate executives might indeed be persuaded to forgo their present short-term "quarterly statement" values, they would still have to face the long-term corporate profits for the sake of social stability when other alternatives are available. The present behavior of North American corporations indicates precisely the opposite. There is also the matter of the growing number of people who, for whatever reason, can never fit into a corporate culture, part time or otherwise. A realistic solution to the problems of alienating work can only come out of a re-examination of corporate behavior, not through the

Pat Mervyn.
Winston

Smallwood's hydro

The misrepresentation of the facts surrounding the negotiation of the Churchill Falls hydro contract has always been tiresome. ("The politics of the high wire," *Financial Editor*, Oct. 7). When you refer to the "ideal deal farmer pioneer Joey Senécalbe agreed," you imply that Senécalbe was responsible for the contents of the contract. Not so. The contract was, with the political assistance of the New-England government, negotiated by the majority owner and operator of the hydro project, Brinco (the British North America Co.). Yes, Senécalbe was guilty of political grandstanding, wanting to take all the credit for what was at the time the largest hydro project in the world. But he was not responsible for other than his own grandstanding. The contract is now, if anyone is to be blamed concerning Churchill Falls, it should be former premier Frank

The Road Ahead
A century-old history of helping

One hundred years ago, in October, 1886, my great-grandfather, Dr. George Sterling Ryerson, realized a dream when he gathered together like-minded citizens of Toronto to form the Canadian Red Cross. That dream was born in 1885 when he served as a physician at the Battle of Deschêze, during the Northwest Rebellion. There he stitched together the first red cross flag to fly in this nation, stitching it to the side of a wagon that carried wounded soldiers.

Today, the Red Cross is more than a custodian of the Geneva Conventions and the world's teacher about international humanitarian law. As it does in Geneva, the Red Cross operates community, domestic and international programs as diverse as first aid, water safety and homemaker services in many nations.

The Canadian Red Cross has depended on many hands, many hearts and many needs. Canadians can be proud of its legendary work during the First and Second World Wars, its medical work on the Canadian frontier, its volunteers during emergencies across Canada—most recently during this summer's Saguenay floods in Quebec—and its 50 years of providing life-saving blood products to so many millions of Canadians.

These ideas have been expressed by the Red Cross in action, for more than 100 years on every continent. Over the years, a concern for combatants in battle has been extended to civilians harmed in war and to

People the world over know that the Canadian Red Cross stands for relief, food, medicine, shelter, clean water, clothing and safety. I know my great grandfather would be incredibly proud of the record of the Canadian Red Cross: 100 years of humanitarian service in Canada and other nations.

The final Round invites readers to advance specific solutions to Canada's political, social and economic problems. Independent submissions may be submitted as paper letters or posted as an electronic public post.

Case for correctness

As a parent of a six-year-old son, I can appreciate that Jehuathan Perrewee was likely involved in a normal, mutually acceptable play when he lassoed a little girl in school ("Kissing and correctness," *World*, Oct. 14). The other examples you cite, however, sound less innocent. In a country where it is a tragic reality that public-school-age boys have raped or murdered other children, it shouldn't be difficult to believe that

Don Power,
Earl, Mid 80s

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10. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 92(439), 1009-1012.

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Abstract

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Another View



Charles Gordon

The right may complain, but it has itself to blame

Dealing with an imperfect world is difficult if we refuse to see it the way it really is. But we must not keep our illusions, which are somehow more comfortable than what is really there.

Bob Inouye has been expressing misapprehensions in recent days about the use of Bob Dylan's *The Times They Are A-Changin'* as a television commercial for a bank. How dare they take those sacred words and profane them for commercial use, people cry. It is as if General Christian Solidarity had suddenly shown up on our TV screen in an advertisement for an arms manufacturer.

But really, that song had to get out of Dylan's hands somehow and into the bank's. Do people think the bank stole it? If this sacrilege has in fact taken place, Dylan, somewhere along the line authorized it. This means that somewhere in Bob Dylan there lies the seed of a capitalist.

People find this difficult to accept. And yet the same capitalist lurks in their souls too. The same people who cherish the purity of the Beatles are not sitting on the floor now in the Monstros, using Kraft dinner by the light of a candle stuck in a Chianti bottle. They are driving cars, owning houses, maybe even playing the stock market. They are not going to coffee houses, they are staying home watching the WCW. And maybe Bob Dylan is too. Times do change.

The generation that wanted to overthrow the system and end war is now getting much in charge of our world. Look around you. The boss is not some old fossil. He or she is probably someone between the ages of 40 and 50, someone who has seen Dylan records at home. If we can generalize about generations, this same person is complaining about taxes, devaluing that the deficit be lowered and less money be spent on social services.

Of course, you can't generalize about generations. Baby boomers are not all the same. But if you can't generalize about them now, you couldn't generalize about them then either. The Beatles were not the same for everyone. One person heard deviance of love and peace there was a peaceful artist singing happy songs that sounded like the Beatles. And for every one of those, there was someone who didn't go to rock concerts, who kept his hair short and was more interested in football.

Now, they are all grown up and somebody is claiming on their behalf that a bank has betrayed them by using a song in a commercial. Get real, people. This is the Nineties, and you helped make them. Perhaps it is because the Nineties seem so unpleasant that no one wants to claim credit for them. This may be behind the reluctance of the new rightists, another group with illusions, to acknowledge that they have been in charge of the world for

quite a few years. Despite much evidence to the contrary, they keep insisting on the power of the left.

Now, to people actually on the left, this insistence is one of the right's few redeeming qualities. The left is battered, of course, and encouraged that there are no right-wingers are frightened of—something besides the budget deficit, that is. When Council Bluffs complained the other day about "the overwhelming abundance of left, left, bland, evasive pay that has poured like sludge through the centre pages of most of the Southern papers for some time," some of us who now work for him were not noticeably encouraged. If there is no longer strength in numbers, there is at least strength in witnesses.

But then we read our newspapers again, and particularly the editorial pages, which have been manfully fighting the defence for the past 15 years or so. Meanwhile, the reactions of this sludge have been harking not merely to elect right-wing governments in most places. So it is difficult to picture exactly what it is that the right thinkers have to complain about.

Just as the definition of the Sixties may have become a little less clear over the years, so has the definition of the right-wing mind, of what constitutes a left-winger. While the traditional left—the New Democratic Party, the Co-operative Commonwealth League and so on—has seemed, to the naked eye, to be in decline, the right has expanded the power of the left by including in its ranks many who never thought of themselves in those terms. The left expands, as it were, by definition. Now it includes not only Roy Romanow and Glen Clark (I only) and Maude Barlow, but also Dalton Camp and Joe Clark. So would Lester B. Pearson be included, if he were alive today. So would John Diefenbaker. And, most notably, would be Jean Charest—at least the Jean. Charest. Canadian readers for

in 1980, the one who talked about creating jobs.

Redefining the left to include what is to be thought of as the centre changes the game. It means that the dreaded enemies of the new righties are not just radicals or even democratic socialists, but those who just believe that there are certain things governments should do and that the free market may not have all the answers.

The great success of the right in demonizing such people is due partly, and possibly, to the co-operation of the media in adopting the budget deficit as the monster of the decade. But more important has been the co-operation of the left itself. Somehow the people who should have been joyfully hounding the establishment had adopted it instead. The idea was to gain supporters by broadening their appeal. It is quite a bit like politicians going electric. Meanwhile, the power of the situation enables the right to escape blame for what has happened on its watch—widespread unemployment, the flight of capital, massive layoffs, the worsening of prospects in the Third World. The only consolation is the thought of what the right might do if it knew it was winning.

Opening Notes

Edited by BARBARA WACKENS

Chips off the old Centre Block

After two years chafed by scaffolding for repairs, the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill is back in public view. And while it remains topped by its trademark old green copper, the rest of the Centre Block need be being replaced by gleaming new copper. But what to do with the 1,000 kg of the metal that had been on the roof for 75 years? Visitors to Ottawa can now take a piece of history home with them and support a good cause at the same time. The parliamentary gift shop is selling tiny pieces of copper from the old roof as lapel pins, made at Ottawa-area workshops by people with developmental disabilities. The federal government sold the metal to two non-profit organizations as well below the market price. With eight grams of copper making 14 pins, there is enough for 56 million of them, and



Parliament's shiny new copper roof pins

with each pin selling for \$1.05, that represents potential revenues of \$4480 million. "This is a godsend," states John Lasegna, an attorney at A&L Industries, which employs 305 disabled people. The pins went on sale Oct. 7, and are proving so lively that key chains, plaques, and paperweights will be launched this week.

Commander Wong

Perseverence Overpass: Just ask Calgary Crown prosecutor Gordon Wong. In 1977, he was a 16-year-old high school student looking for summer job when he joined the Naval Reserve as an ordinary seaman. He then spent the next 20 summers learning to be a sailor. This work in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has made him a good commander, takes over the \$80-million

HMCS Esplanade, the fourth of 62 new ships being delivered to the navy as part of Canada's \$700-million Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel program. The Esplanade will sail from Halifax to its home port of Victoria via the Panama Canal in February. "It's ironic that a guy from Calgary will be the first commander of the Esplanade," says Wong, 36, who has taken a two-year leave of absence from the prosecutor's office. "We seldom do a good-natured riding in both places."

Service with a sweat

Hotel room service usually consists of food and drink, but an establishment in Montreal, N.E., has taken this concept interest—seriously—dinner. Staff at the 310-room Canadian Pacific Hotel Beauport will deliver fitness equipment 24 hours a day. Began as a pilot project in July, the hotel now fields an average of 20 requests a day for stationary bikes, free weights and aerobic steps to be delivered to guests' rooms. "It may sound rather lame here tonight, but in their room that dance," says hotel general manager Alex Kasyan, "we are going to accommodate them." Held the best, bring on the iron.

The evil that is Halloween

Halloween, which began as an ancient Celtic ritual, these days is usually no cause for costumed children to demand candy. But Marilyn Iremonger sparked a devil of a debate when she banned any observance of the pagan festival at the three day care centres she operates in Fredericton, New Brunswick, on Oct. 4 letter to parents of the 25 preschoolers under her supervision, is "one of the low-class subcultures, when witches go out to worship the



Trick or treaters among their own autumn

devil." Children, she added, "are too precious to expose them to anything that is based on evil." As a result, while at least six families are planning to show their children to different day care centres, others are considering cross-line theories in kindergarten's facilities. Many others take a local radio show supported the ban, claiming Halloween fuels interest in the occult and Satanism. But Alison Beyerle, a religious and culture professor at the city's St. Thomas University, says that Kristin's ban has caused disagreement with Satanism. "People with narrow understandings," adds Beyerle, "don't like to equate non-Christian images to anti-Christian ones."

A maverick takes over at The Citizen

Talk about getting scooped: When the CBC's Saint John, N.B., radio station announced last week that Neil Reynolds, editor and publisher of the *Triumph Journal* and the *Saint John Times Globe*, was leaving to become editor of The Citizen in Ottawa, it beat all other news outlets—including Reynolds's own papers—in the story. It's the winner of Citizen editor Jim Traverses. Of 7 resignation, Conrad Black, who took control of Southern News Corp's stable of papers two months ago, turned in a 56-year-old maverick with a knack for transforming newspapers. Under Reynolds's leadership, the *Kingston Whig-Standard* was a wallflower of awards for journalistic excellence. In Saint John, he turned two of the country's worst dailies around in three years; this year, the papers won the Canadian Journalism Foundation's national Excellence in Journalism Award. Daring and hard-headed Reynolds has Black's position new for Reynolds—the New Brunswick papers are owned by the living family of Saint John. Two years ago, after Reynolds was fired as editor in a dispute with the publisher, he was rehired two months later as both editor and publisher. Now Reynolds, who starts at The Citizen on Nov. 4, is saying little about his plans. "My trial is to find out how everything else just do the job," he says. As for Black, rounding out last week's appointments, he picked Nick Elmi, 40, from the editorship of TV Guide to become editor-in-chief of the *Windsor Free Press*, replacing Duxton McManis, first-time executive editor in May

BEST-SELLERS

FICTION

1. *Man Book*, Margaret Atwood (1)
2. *The War of Wives*, Elizabeth Taylor (2)
3. *First of the Year*, Anne-Marie MacDonald (3)
4. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
5. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
6. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
7. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
8. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
9. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
10. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)

NONFICTION

1. *Man Book*, Margaret Atwood (1)
2. *The War of Wives*, Elizabeth Taylor (2)
3. *First of the Year*, Anne-Marie MacDonald (3)
4. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
5. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
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9. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)
10. *The Invention of Solitude*, Cop Hildebrandt (4)

Beasts of imagination



They are the creatures of fear and superstition. But in the hands of the author of *Beasts of Imagination*, an anthology of verse and prose from London's *London Review*, which has already published *Diogenes*, *Plutarch* and *Apollonius*, and others—*Diogenes*, *Plutarch* and *Apollonius*—the beasts also give their place in art.

Passages

DIED: Outspoken feminist Laura Sabat, 80, who forged Canada's modern women's movement, after a two-decade battle with Parkinson's disease, in Toronto. In 1966, as president of the Canadian Federation of University Women, Sabat brought together more than 30 women's lobbying groups and pushed Ottawa into establishing the groundbreaking Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The result: The National Action Committee on the Status of Women was founded in 1972 and, a year later, became the backbone of the federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Married to a doctor for 38 years until his death in 1978, Sabat later criticised the institution and advised



RISING: To pop megastar Madonna, 38, and her personal trainer Carlos Leon, 30, a six-pack, mini-circus girl, *Leslie's Maria* *Diogenes*, in Los Angeles.

DIED: Joe Mann, 83, who headed the Canadian Labour Congress from 1974 to 1978, of a heart attack, in Victoria.

ASSUMED: By Montreal conductor Agnes Gosselin, 52, the baton of the *Vernon Boys Choir*. The first woman to lead the 100-year-old choir. The *Vernon-Boys Choir* Gosselin had led her choir after the Second World War. But her appointment still provoked controversy in a city where women are barred from playing in its world-famous orchestra.

DIED: Former French tennis star René Lacoste, 92, who developed an internationally successful line of sportswear featuring the alligator, inspired by his nickname, Le Crocodile, in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, in the southwest coast of France.

DIVORCING: Rock legend Mick Jagger, 53, and supermodel Jerry Hall, 40, according to published reports in London. The couple, who have three children, have been together since 1976 and married in 1990. Hall is said to have fired Jagger's phrenerding.



MacKinnon: they're thinking of me here!

Toy cars with smarts

Alan MacKinnon's toy cars are not cheap. They cost four of them, 15-cm model "Parasols" that cost the University of British Columbia about \$25,000 a year to maintain. But then, they are not just any toy cars. They are prototypes of "intelligent" robots that may one day zip around the house

during the floor while dodging the dog and paying close attention to the really big dust bunnies. For now, however, the models, radio-controlled by computers, have another purpose: playing soccer. Facing off two-on-two on a sheet of plywood in MacKinnon's lab, the little cars strive to outsmart their opponents in driving a Ping-Pong ball into a goal. The project's scientific intent is to develop software capable of grasping such abstract concepts as strategy and planning. "They're thinking all the time," MacKinnon says of his cars. "Can I get to the ball before the other guy? Should I back off and play more defensively?" As a platform for experiments in artificial intelligence, however, the smart cars have taken the fancy of other leading researchers. A tournament in Nagoya, Japan, next year will pit the UBC Parasols against model cars from several other labs. And MacKinnon, who has been his experiment, holds strong appeal for the unscientific as well. "Whoever we have an open-house," he laughs, "the kids love it."

Manning's tax cut crusade

Reform puts a positive spin on fiscal restraint

BY BRIAN BERGMAN

During his teenage years, Preston Manning spent many early daylight hours milking cows and performing other chores at the dairy farm near Edmonton owned by his father, Ernest. Then the Social Credit premier of Alberta, 50, in the Reform party leader stood one sunny afternoon last week's small boys at bay on a barn near Grangerville, Ont., fielding questions from local high-school students, the scene was not quite as incongruous as it at first appeared. In the course of the half-hour session—one of several carefully staged events during a four-day pre-election tour of southern Ontario—Manning looked on most of Reform's top two, including cradling down an angry offender and tackling the \$600-billion federal debt, which he said placed an unfair burden on younger Canadians. His message struck a chord among some members of his adolescent audience. "I think it's true what he said about passing on the debt," said Ashley Harrison, 15, later as she crunched on the apple outside the barn. "We're the ones who are going to have to pay for it."

The prize for Manning is that Harrison was too young to cast a ballot in the next election, expected as early as next spring. The purpose of last week's whirled tour, after all, was to trail for potential votes in a province that is crucial to Reform's long-term survival. But even where recent polls showed the party trailing far behind the Liberals and even well back of the once-mobilized federal Conservative party, in an attempt to turn these fortunes around, Manning opted to unveil his party's self-styled "fresh start" election platform at a sausage-style rally in London, Ont., last Thursday.

The gleamy 22-page document sets out the ideal of Canada that Reform envisions for the 21st century. It is a Canada that, among other things, would focus public funding for such 20th-century institutions as the CBC, Via Rail and Canada Post, on favor of pouring more money into health care and education—yet to mention bootstrapping a proposed \$2,000 tax cut for the average family of four. It is also a Canada where Ottawa would stop funding welfare programs and climate or drastically curtail aid to a number of other areas, including regional development, the Office of Official Languages and Indian Affairs. As Manning put it in his address to about 1,000 party faithful in London: "What we are offering is a revolutionary departure from the old politics of the status quo."



Evangelist: Accusing Manning of an ideological war against national institutions

In many ways, though, it was also a reasonable—and according to Reform's critics, hypocritical—departure from policies previously advocated by the party. Until recently, Reform had staved away from proposing tax cuts, focusing instead on the need to eliminate the deficit. But the Liberals' succession coopting that issue—all the while portraying the party's 25-member caucus as heart-firm—has deeply frustrated Reformers. As a result, the election platform, laid out in part through private polling and focus groups, strives to put a positive spin on Reform's economic agenda.

To be sure, the fiscal leader still being belted, carrying some \$13 billion a year out of federal spending, including the \$3.5 billion that currently goes toward provincial welfare programs. But with the plan comes the promised relief: in addition to the tax cut, Reform proposes to increase provincial transfer payments for health and education by \$4 billion a year. It also claims that the economic stimulus provided by reduced spending and taxes would spark the

Manning in London: Is revolutionary departure from the status quo

creation of a million jobs over four years—80,000 more than would be the case under the Liberal program.

The kinder, gentler Reform message was much in evidence last week as Manning walked through southern Ontario. His spin of the sense of job insecurity felt by millions of Canadians, and of the stress on parents who must work longer and harder to provide for their families, is a crutched list of role reversal. He even lambasted the Liberals for cutting too far, too fast on health care, suggesting that "if people knew the truth about Liberal slashing of health care transfers, there would be a sign in front of every closed hospital saying 'This hospital closed by the Liberal Party of Canada.'"

The chart topped off that attack responded in kind. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, charged with one pre-election tour of Western Canada, accused the Reform leader of waging an ideological war against national institutions. "Government," Chrétien told reporters in Burlington, B.C., "can be a force for good in society." Finance Minister Paul Martin was even more blunt. He dismissed the Reform election platform as "a divisive and very negative document" that would put "rejection against region and Canadian against Canadian."

These reactions were perhaps predictable. For more surprising was the anxious response among some of Manning's own MPs. Keith Martin, a 30-year-old physician who represents the B.C. riding of Esquimalt/Juan de Fuca, told *Maclean's* he was dismayed by the election platform's lack of detail on how the spending cuts would be achieved. Martin also said he feared that Reform was simply offloading Ottawa's fiscal burden. "I will not accept tax cuts federally that are going to be broken on the backs of the provinces," he said. And while he welcomed the promise of improved health and health care and education, Martin said that the platform did not do enough to dispel the public image of Reform that "we are bigoted, red-necked, homophobic and religious radicals."

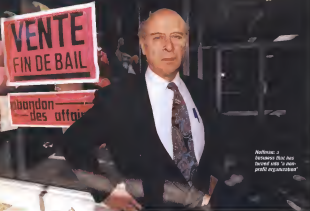
Such remarks underscore the fact that, for Manning, the "fresh start" theme he touted last week has a double meaning. The Reform leader is trying to get behind him a particularly dismal period in the life of his nine-year-old party. In recent months, he has temporarily suspended two Reform MPs for remarks offensive to gays and ethnic minorities. He also lost one highly-profiled Ontario MP, Jan Brown, who renounced over what she called the "extremist views" of some of her colleagues, while another, Stephen Harper—an early and influential supporter of Manning's who has repeatedly sided with the leader—announced that he would not seek reelection.

Through it all, Reform has languished in the polls. An Angus Reid Group survey released on Oct. 7 showed Reform at only 11-per-cent support nationally, compared with 51 per cent for the Liberals, 17 per cent for the Conservatives and nine per cent for the NDP. In the crucial battleground of Ontario, where Reform made second in 1993 in 56 of the province's 99 ridings but elected only one MP, the party's position is even weaker—reflected in the fact that only 18 per cent of Ontarians say they intend to vote for Manning as leader. Private Liberal and NDP officials share this feeling, leading some to suggest that the Tories, not Reform, stand to make the most gains at election time. Said one Liberal strategist: "The Tories will be the only other contenders in Ontario."

Manning acknowledges that he has some personal image problems, which he relates in part to the recent alcoholism in his party. "I was either blamed for letting them happen—or blamed for doing something to cause them," he said in a candid interview. "I don't know as it shouldn't be my way back, the brilliant orange-and-yellow bludge of mid-October Ontario. It is also well aware of the huge gap between his performance in intimate settings—like the ones last week, where he handled audience queries with aplomb and wit—and the stern image he so often projects in Question Period and parliamentary acrimony. "One of the most frequent things that's said to me in these personal appearances," he noted, "is that 'You are not at all like you are on TV.'"

For all of that, Manning insists that Reform's fortunes will fly or founder not on personality, but policy—which is one reason he wants to unveil his party's election platform so early in the game. He fully expects the Liberals and Tories to bring forward their own tax cut proposals, but maintains that as the parties of "high taxes and big government," they will have little credibility with voters. Certainly that was the view expressed by Allan Rock, the 58-year-old manufacturing sales director who arrived up his hobby farm near Grangerville to Reform for last week's photo-op. "To see the economic malaise that Canada's in, put the blame squarely on the federal government," says Boretti. "Whether it's Liberals or Conservatives, it hasn't changed in 20 years. So I'm certainly willing to go. Preston Manning has a lock at the end." The crucial question now for Reformers: how many other Canadians are willing to do the same.

with E. KATE FULTON in Ottawa



Clément: a spokesman for the provincial government

CANADA

Quebec's distinct dilemma

On the eve of the Parti Québécois government's second, and much publicized, summit on Quebec's economic future, stark reminders of decline are not hard to find. Along the scenic shopping plaza on Montée St-Roch Street, amid the bridal shops and bargain dollar stores, at two-dozen vacant stores, their windows empty or papered over. The list of casualties on the 400 store strip will soon lengthen. Next year, Harold Haffman, 62, intends to close Chris Demoreau, the women's clothing store he has operated for three decades. After five years of shrinking business and what he calls a "disaster" last year, Haffman prefers to shut his doors rather than go bankrupt and turn his attention to two other stores on the street in which he is a partner. Political instability, he says, has weakened the provincial economy. And as the process, he adds, Chris Demoreau "burned into a neurological equivalent."

Many other stores are saying similar things. Doing so about Quebec is general. And while provincial leaders may dispute Haff-

The province's leaders scramble for economic answers

man's interpretation of the reasons behind the decline, there is no denying the grim facts. Quebec lost 25,000 jobs in the first nine months of this year. Unemployment remains stubbornly high at 12.9 per cent. Over that same period, Ontario gained 67,000 jobs, while an unemployment rate stood at 9.2 per cent. Other statistics, meanwhile, have highlighted different trouble spots. The province's share of Canadian prime assessment has declined drastically—from 23.1 per cent nine years ago to 17.4 per cent in 1996. The situation has led some Quebecers thinking of greater postures last spring, more than 13,645 people moved away from Quebec—as presaging the

largest net loss for the province in any three-month period since 1982. "What is worrisome," said economist Pierre Clément, head of the Quebec wing of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, "is that we are not going in the same direction as the other provinces. We haven't done anything to improve our competitiveness for the past 10 years."

With the province's financial affairs under scrutiny, Premier Lucien Bouchard is hoping the last-day economic summit beginning Oct. 25—one day before the anniversary of last year's sovereignty referendum—will help kick start the economy. But consensus at the coming meeting may be harder to achieve than at the first conference held last March. Then, the participants—politicians, business and labor leaders, and academics—agreed to the government's overall plan to eliminate the provincial deficit, which is estimated at \$1.2 billion for the coming fiscal year, by the turn of the century. But this time, with an agenda

that includes job creation and the provincial economy as well as deficit reduction, the prospects for collaboration appear to be growing.

Some union members warn that going to the summit would be like walking into a trap. They suggest that the government used their participation at last March's summit to legitimize cuts to health and education—as assessed after the conference in a \$1.2-billion budget cut. Others have leveled at Bouchard's recent comments that public servants must do their part in reducing the deficit. That has raised the spectre of Quebec City reeling as a pre-reformism deal to raise public sector wages—not setting course away from the unions in other areas. The unions have clearly not forgotten the provincial wage rollback for public sector workers following the 1990 sovereignty referendum—when this chief negotiator for the Lévesque government was once other than Bouchard himself. Clément Gauthier, head of the Quebec Federation of Labor, told reporters last week that he was fazed whether "we're proposing a summit on employment—or a summit on cuts."

Pressure on the government is also mounting from other directions. Quebec employer groups want the PQ to reduce high payroll taxes. They are also opposed to what they say is the over-bureaucratization of the province. One example of that: the reestablishment of Quebec's so-called language police to enforce the French language charter. Business groups also take aim at the government's plans to enact pay equity legislation—which by some estimates may end up costing \$1.5 billion a year.

One topic the Bouchard government clearly wants to steer away from is sovereignty—and the effects of political uncertainty on the provincial economy. At the

March summit, Bouchard suggested that the business community's fears surrounding sovereignty were "probably more psychological than real." More recently, notes the *Opposition Libérale* finance critic, André Boivin, Bouchard has been mute on the subject—especially at a pre-summit speech to the *Laval* Chamber of Commerce

meets in Quebec will have to be increased in order to compensate for the provincial government's declining revenues. There is a political minefield. If Quebec does receive a greater share of federal funding, it could spark another crisis within Confederation. The other provinces—Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia—would argue that they are, in effect, funding Quebec's ongoing separation debate. The government's position would argue that they are being penalized if Quebec gets in its second share of the funding—at their expense.

Some Quebecers remain optimistic about their economic future. "A lot has to be done in terms of marketing the province and setting the record straight," said Luc Bouchard, an economist with the Royal Bank in Montreal. "We still have a relatively sound economic base—Quebec is Canada's most diversified province." And although the worst is that people will be disappointed if they expect the summit to yield "magical solutions that will solve everything," Bouchard adds that "I do think interesting ideas will come out of it."

In fact, for the past few months, business, labor and community leaders have been working in a series of committees, voluntarily examining ways to bolster job creation and come up with concrete proposals for the summit. That behind-the-scenes process, says Quebec's dramatic magazine *Jeune Capitale*, is a good alternative to costly commission of inquiry. And, he notes, "It means that every one wants to have results." That could well work in the government's favor in a province plagued by economic decline and political division. A little unity could go a long way.

RENEE BRANWELL, in Montreal with MARY JINGLIN in Toronto



Bouchard attempting to steer clear of the sovereignty issue

in early October. He has to create jobs and stimulate the economy but he forgot to tell us how he will do it while not removing the main objective of the government—which is to separate Quebec from the rest of Canada," Bouchard said. "I say that the PQ's goal is job creation."

That is a sentiment shared by many politicians outside Quebec. Last week, federal justice department officials told *Montreal's* that Ottawa fears future expatriation pop-

Wonder
If You'll Ever Get to Walk
on the Great Wall of China?

Taking on the Tories

Labor groups prepare to shut down Toronto

Billy Kitchen is one of the best-attended of the Canadian labor movements. For over two decades, he has worked as a Niagara International transport truck assembly plant in Chatham, Ont., 250 km southwest of Toronto, and earned a reputation as an effective organizer and negotiator for the Canadian Auto Workers. For the past two months, the 45-year-old Kitchen has been on sabbatical leave of absence to help plan the Metro Days of Action—some of the largest labor-sponsored events in Canadian history. Working from a seventh-floor office in north Toronto as part of a 60-member organizing team, Kitchen and three other union networks have arranged for picketing that adds to shut down more than 500 public and private sector workers and parades. Toronto's economy on Oct. 25—part of a five-day protest against Mike Harris's provincial Conservatives. "This government just hasn't listened to us," said Kitchen. "I've been involved in picketing a government's cars, such as carrying with protesters, have not been successful."

The Metro Days of Action, which also include education forums and day care rallies and coordinate a march on Queen's Park on Oct. 26, are part of labor's effort to change that. Organizers embraced the hope that the protest would be a catalyst for a new wave of youth demonstrations like last December's, will encourage the defuncting Tories that there is broad and growing opposition to their plan to balance the budget through spending cuts, public sector job and program reductions. In fact, local organizers are counting on more than 800 loads of teachers, civil servants and other nonunion workers from across Ontario to join them. "We're fighting for the quality of life in this province," said Dupa of Action on Ontario. Toronto's vice president of the Labor Council of Metropolitan Toronto and York Region.

Last week, business leaders warned that the repercussions of the Oct. 25 crisis will likely be felt nationally. Spokesmen for Canada Post said that they expected their Toronto operations, which handle 50 per

Employees feared that the demonstra-

can avoid costly the lost business—generally millions in lost revenues—and the lasting damage to Toronto's image. As of last week, most companies did not know whether their workplaces would be among the 500 to be protected. Some city officials, however, anticipated that protesters would disrupt operations at major hotels, manufacturers, bank headquarters, perhaps even the Toronto Stock Exchange.

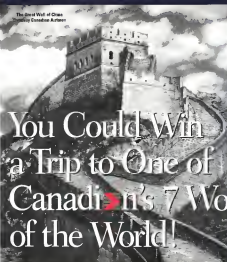
Clashed horns. The 500 companies and thousands of transactions daily at centralized processing centres were proposed to shift those operations to banking facilities if necessary. "The financial impact is astounding when you look at shutting down the economy of Toronto for one or two days," said Elsie Altus, chief executive officer at the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto.

Without question, the most critical target for Days of Action organizers is the Toronto Transit Commission. Last week, they made no secret of their intent to shut down the city's subways, streetscars and buses, which carry 1.3 million passengers daily. In fact, some observers noted that tying up a city and creating massive traffic jams could leave the public more angry at the protesters than at the Tory government.

and labour and social scientists insisted that they are trying to defend basic services that benefit everyone. Among their dozens of reasons, the Harris Tories—who still boast a solid 46 per cent support in public opinion polls—have cut welfare payments and slashed thousands of civil servants, announced plans to close dozens of hospitals and to infuse private health care into Ontario's 160 school boards. Coaster values cabinet ministers contend that they are merely correcting problems caused by years of over-spending by previous governments. "There has to be change so that Ontario can continue to provide excellent services in a sustainable fashion," said management board chair-

But labor leaders reject that line of reasoning, arguing that they must play hard ball to stop the government. "We can't have passive resistance," said Sid Ryan, president of the Ontario division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. "We have to send a strong message to Mike Harris and the business community that if they want to change the social network it's going to be a war hell of a fight." Come Oct. 25, three strands of people are planning to take that battle to the streets.

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Anthony Wilson-Smith



Backstage Ottawa

The Ottawa handicap

For anyone seeking confirmation that a federal election next spring is increasingly likely, consider this: Liberals now sound more like reformers, and Reformers more like Liberals. When political parties start marching from different sides of the road squarely towards the ideological middle, it is usually because that is where they expect to meet the electorate. So it is that Reformers—who usually regard money spent by government on costly welfare—now promise that, if elected, they would spend more on education and health care. The Liberals—who used to regard money spent by

The Bloc Québécois. Bad news for Michel Gauthier: polls show that many Quebecers think the party has not yet chosen a successor to now Premier Lucien Bouchard, and sovereignty remains the party's main goal. Gauthier doesn't get along. Worse, one in five Quebecers who voted Yes to sovereignty in last year's referendum, tell pollsters they won't vote for the Bloc. The key to the Bloc's chances rests on whether Bouchard is prepared to campaign about on the Bloc's behalf—and whether Gauthier will agree to that.

Reform. The party's snap-point election program released last week is shrewd and particularly attractive to middle-income Canadians. But is anyone listening outside of Alberta and parts of British Columbia? The party has all but fallen off the map in Ontario (below 10 per cent in the polls), and has never captured in Quebec or the Atlantic provinces. And it is having trouble must able to attract middle-of-the-road voters, witness the loss of moderate MP Jan Brown and the retirement of the party's most respected MP, Stephen Harper. Unless Manning overcomes that trend, Reform's share of seats could be no more than 20 something after the next election.

The Liberals. Yes, they're winning popularity in the next election. But problems loom. This week, the party will release a Son of Red Book in which they will claim to have kept about 80 per cent of their election promises. That will include the preposterous notion that they made good on their promise to get rid of the Goods and Services Tax because they struck a harmonization deal with some provinces. That comes hot on the heels of the Prime Minister's incoherent claim of mixture with street people. When Liberals compare Chrétien to Mackenzie King, it is supposed to be in terms of King's electoral success—and not his penchant for conversations with ghosts. But Chrétien's grumbling backbenchers can take heart: think how embarrassing it would have been to have to admit that he speaks more often to vagrants than to them.

Behind the rhetoric, all of the parties face distinct challenges in the pre-vote sprint

The Progressive Conservatives. The two-seat Tories will hope in particular for votes in the Atlantic provinces, rural Ontario and parts of the Prairies. But the Liberals have already swept the most attractive elements of the Tory platform, and the ultra-right (Baby Blue) young members of the party keep pushing Jean Charest as a direction he doesn't want to take. He desperately needs a policy on Quebec that consists of something more than finger-wagging at Charest.

The New Democratic Party. With corporate profits and unemployment rates both on the rise, these should be golden times for the NDP. But the party has a leader no one knows about (Alexa McDonough) and policies no one believes in. To win, the party must still seriously think the Free Trade Agreement with the United States could, or should, be scrapped. A new platform would help.

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Canada NOTES

MEASURING NOISES

During a two-day visit to Washington, Federal Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Stéphane Duceppe said that the denigration of Canada is "unhelpful." In a speech, Duceppe added that gradual changes to the Canadian federation will keep Quebec within Canada—and will seek other Canadians more amenable "to accept the Quebec differences." He also told reporters privately that Quebec would not be able to declare independence without the federal government's agreement—a direct contradiction of the Quebec government's position.

BLOOD SCANDAL DEFENCE

The inquiry into Canada's tainted blood scandal resumed hearings with Michel Charbon, a scientist at the Clinical Parasitology Institute of Montreal and the Prime Minister's brother-in-law, who co-authored a 1987 study on AIDS with conservative chemist Justice Horton Krieger, testified that during the 1980s the virus was known as the "Oz virus." The Ontario government has received notice from Krieger that it is one of the parties that could be held accountable for not safeguarding the blood system from AIDS. It is trying to show that it could have done little—due to lack of knowledge about the disease.

CONSERVATION CONGRESS

About 2,000 delegates gathered in Montreal for the two-week-long World Conservation Congress. Deputy Prime Minister Jean Charest attacked the European Union for its plan to ban Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Canada. Environment Minister Sergio Marchi also discussed his amending legislation to protect endangered species, which includes still possible for animals, including eagles, cranes and injured animals.

FUNDING FOR ANGLOS

According to a study by Université de Montréal professor Michel Marzari, public funding for Quebec's English-language universities is too high—resulting in "social inequities." The study, obtained by the Montreal daily *Le Presse*, noted that English institutions get 30.7 per cent of federal funding to Quebec universities and 23.6 per cent of provincial funds—while English-language accounts for only 8.8 per cent of the population.



A MARINE BOMB: A force storm packing hurricane-force winds that gusted up to 160 km an hour hit Vancouver Island, knocking down trees, toppling street lights, crashing pleasure boats into rocks, and cutting power to about 14,800 homes in the Victoria area. The disturbance, described by meteorologists as a marine bomb—a storm that quickly intensifies as it approaches a coastline—resulted in one death near Langford, 70 km north of Victoria. Some observers labelled it the area's worst storm in 35 years. It also hit the B.C. mainland, bringing high winds, rain and power outages in the Vancouver region and, in some places, snow.

'I didn't say I talked to him'

Prime Minister Jean Charest has always portrayed his populist image—but was denounced by his state critics to high-school students in Dauphin, Man., that he meets with lower-class people as an effort to find out what they think. From those conversations, he added, he has learned that there are limits to what government can do for the people. But that, said a spokeswoman for the prime minister, and reporters' inability to find a link between the prime minister and the Prime Minister's Office could verify the Prime Minister's statement—none the less.

"It's not a regular thing," said one official in the Prime Minister's Office. A flustered Charest

told reporters that his chair with the headless took place while he was leader of the opposition, now, as prime minister, security precautions no longer allow him that freedom. "A few times, I've done it in my life because I want to know the real problems of the people," he said. As for his claim that he regularly visited with a homeless man in Ottawa—"We just sat with a chair in the corner of the street," Charest told the students—the Prime Minister's Office was not involved. "I see, I see, I see," said one official. "I see, I see, I see. I said I see a person in the street since time when I'm travelling in the city," Charest said. "I said I see a man in Ottawa. I didn't say I talked to him."

Captain Newfoundland strikes back

Captain Canada has become Captain Newfoundland. And as such, Premier Brian Tobin took his campaign against the Churchill Falls hydroelectric deal to Quebec last week. Broadly speaking 1984 Hydro Quebec document suggesting that Quebec would be willing to renegotiate the contract. Tobin called on Quebecers to pressure their government for changes. Under the terms of the agreement, signed in 1980, Quebec is allowed to buy electricity from Newfoundland at a guaranteed price over a 50-year period and to sell it for high profits to the United States. Quebec officials reiterated earlier statements that they will not renegotiate.

The Lebed purge

Boris Yeltsin's security chief is out—but not down

He is a hairy separatist with out-spoken views and a bona fide no-war. As President Boris Yeltsin's national security adviser, he negotiated a peace agreement with separatist rebels in Chechnya, attacked crime and corruption—and made himself the most popular politician in Russia. Last week, he became an unemployed politician. In an unexpected appearance on national television, on Friday, Yeltsin, with a flourish of his black khalat, signed a decree firing a man whom he had once described as his best appointee. "Alexander Lebed has been a disruptive influence," said a drawn and haggard Yeltsin, accusing the 46-year-old retired army general of working an increasingly power-struggle within the Kremlin. Despite Yeltsin's attempt to fire him, the firing appeared more like the act of an officer reluctantly fighting the challenge of a peer older nearly 20 years, his junior. And far from ending the Kremlin of a loose cannon, the action converted the over-the-hill into a weapon aimed squarely at the Yeltsin regime. "This decision does not worry me," Lebed breezily declared after his sacking. "I'm going to continue my political work."

Few doubt that. But Yeltsin's move has at least interrupted a one-man rule. Lebed, who last June finished a strong third in the opening round of Russia's presidential contest, Yeltsin, with an eye on a surprise campaign in party circles, invited Lebed to join his administration as security chief, a move that solidified Yeltsin's final victory at the polls two weeks later but also put Lebed in position to assume power. Yeltsin wanted the Kremlin's backyard intrigues. His expedition will do little to help him struggle to succeed a president who in recent weeks has all but retired from public view. And far from bringing him, Lebed's firing may have given him all too much attention: a substantial boost. "Yeltsin has given Lebed a wonderful gift," says Viktor Lomashov, senior analyst at Moscow's Institute of Social and Political Research. "Now, he is free to raise the political stage, to say whatever pleases the crowd, and to build up his own political base. At the same time, he has his adversaries in government, particularly the Chechens, under his belt."



As Lebed's replacement, Yeltsin named in a loyal moderate, Ilya Rybkin, 50, a former speaker of the State Duma (lower house of parliament) who used that position to lead off potential clashes with the president. Now, as secretary of Yeltsin's powerful Security Council and as the president's personal envoy to breakaway Chechnya, Rybkin is unlikely to stir trouble in the Kremlin. He is a different public image while Yeltsin is ill. The 65-year-old Russian journalist is scheduled to undergo heart bypass surgery in mid-November. If the operation restores Yeltsin to full strength, then Lebed's current popularity may prove ephemeral, fading as company with the prospect of early elections before the president's term officially comes to an end in the year 2000. If, on the other hand, Yeltsin's failing powers necessitate a call for new elections sometime soon, Lebed may well stand to reap the benefits of being unconcernedly damaged by an unpopular government.

That Yeltsin is seriously ill at the moment is beyond question. On television last week, he appeared frail, stumbling over his words, occasionally losing the thread of his message to the point where he appeared to require of viewers pausing. Many Russian observers, in fact, maintain that Yeltsin's health has deteriorated to the point

that day-to-day control of the country's affairs is no longer in the president's hands but rather in those of his close associates—especially chief of staff Anatoly Chubais and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. "These days Yeltsin is 60 per cent Chubais, 20 per cent Chernomyrdin and only 20 per cent Yeltsin himself," contends Sergei Mironov, an analyst at the Carnegie Endowment in Moscow. Neither Chubais nor Chernomyrdin harbor any affection for Lebed. Both, in fact, have been in the forefront of a sustained and visible campaign to discredit the former general in recent days. If Russian public opinion polls can be believed, however, the attacks have only strengthened Lebed's

the face of a bulging. As interim minister, Kalkov was in charge of Russian forces in Chechnya in August when the rebels retook Grozny, the shattered regional capital, from larger, better-armed federal forces. Lebed publicly accused him as one of the incompetent military leaders who had lost a war that was fought to maintain Russia's territorial integrity. And he concluded that attack by threatening to resign if Yeltsin did not sack Kalkov.

Kalkov did not want long to mount a counter-attack. In the past three weeks, he had called ministerial deputies in the Duma against Lebed's peace plan, calling it a sell-out and accusing the general of "high treason." Kalkov's assertion last week that Lebed had planned to mount a "treasonous coup" was only the latest salvo in a coordinated attack on the security adviser. Pro-government papers were pressed to depict Lebed in a negative light. "This campaign," said Alexander Shiba, an editor at the weekly *Novaya Novina*, "was calculated to warn Lebed to think about what he was saying."

But the pressure tactics did not work. Lebed continued on a course that provided him a chance to replace Yeltsin and his political incompetence. Blatantly, he urged the president to resign for health reasons. Lebed also forged an odd-couple alliance with Alexander Korzhakov, Yeltsin's former bodyguard and a man who has been linked to Kaspersky, the 19th-century monk who was the ultimate Kremlin insider at his day. In the end, most analysts agree, Lebed was done in by Yeltsin's powerful chief of staff, Chubais. Until last week's sacking, Lebed, Chubais and prime minister Chernomyrdin formed a trinity that exercised and competed for power in Yeltsin's increasingly embittered regime. "Lebed was a big stumbling block for Chubais," says Levonidov. "If he were not, it was impossible for Chubais's authority to speak and act in Yeltsin's name were not undermined, as long as Lebed was around." In fact, Lebed concentrated most of his return fire on Chubais, a 46-year-old who is the regime's ablest administrator and who must at least part in his spending of influence to his close relationship—how close is a matter of matter—with Yeltsin's daughter and most trusted confidante, 36-year-old Tatyana Dyachenko. "Chubais," said Lebed, "is now the regret, the power behind the throne."

Still, as Lebed headed into the political wilderness, however briefly, to attempt to build a political base for his presidential ambitions, he sounded a warning about the effects of his dismissal on the Chechen conflict. He stressed that the current little about his position from the Kremlin but did not ignore his own position as Russian chief negotiator in the western region. "In the only one who really believe in Chechnya," he said, "and I'm the only one that the Russian people believe in Chechnya."

There was some leeway for his beliefs. Within one hour of the broadcast of Lebed's dismissal, unnamed representatives were telephoning Moscow from Chechnya, furious at the news. They confirmed that the general said he had their trust and wanted his interrupted appointment to risk restoring the war in an attempt to impose military solutions in Chechnya, as Germany was in Moscow. It didn't withstand to act decisively. It is clear that Russia is to be a place where instability and uncertainty were once again on the rise.



Kalkov makes the announcement on television, Lebed jokes with reporters after his sacking (left); Chubais (below) Alexander Litvinenko

popularity. A major reason for that position in the single shot in Chechnya.

The retired general did not shrink from accepting the proposed choice of settling peace with the Chechens separately, shortly after joining Yeltsin's team. Where others, including Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, had seen their efforts launched, Lebed succeeded. He did so by the simple, if controversial, expedient of delaying a final decision on Chechen independence for five years. Ordinary Russians, approved of as well as the 21-month conflict that had caused as many as 100,000 lives. But Lebed's change that Russian generals had long held conflict of the war quickly earned him enemies among his military colleagues.

Chief among these was Anatoly Kalkov, a 50-year-old with a military background and



MARCOLOM GRANT with PRAD (Yeltsin) in Moscow

WORLD

with foreign landlords has not been a happy one." In Scotland's riding on the prosperous northeast coast, people are blunt about their attitudes to the English. "We don't like them here," says Mary Stewart, who works in a hotel in Cruden Bay where many English fans have arrived to buy homes in the 1980s. Along the coast, controversial fishing communities reverberate with complaints of "foreigner prices" in off-shore waters, and at home Scottish fishing interests have been sold out by the London government. "Money talks and the Spanish are buying up the Scottish boats along the coast," said a natty-cheeked Stanley Wood as runners beamed like bolinas off the deck of his boat Lord Fiddie in Foweyburgh Harbour. "Soon enough that'll be the end of Scottish fishing."

Scotland acknowledges the deflating nature of such widespread moaning. "Scots have a predilection to have a chip on their shoulder," he said in an interview with *The Scotsman* newspaper last month in which he admonished Scots to drop their "blame the English" whineage. And he has made out to campaign firms that might feel threatened by nationalist movements—especially the so-called New Scots. Scotland argues that Scottish nationalism isn't a "civic" nationalism: you are a Scot simply by living within its borders, not because your roots are in the clan system. "Political nationalism won't come unless an nationalism is a positive force, not just an emotional appeal but a rational one," he said last week in London as he strode past the lines of tourists waiting to get inside Westminster. "Not every nationalist movement is malign."

"Scottish nationalism says 'Come and join us,'" agrees Jimmy Logan, 61, one of the town's most revered actors who was appearing on stage in the comedy, *The Flowers of Edinburgh*, that fall. The play is about the clash of English and Scottish cultures in the 18th century, a theme that has resonance for modern audiences. But Logan warns against taking historic grievances to give a political edge. "Pretending to be a Scot is to be a Scot," he says. "But it was not one that bitterness about the past in 1990. There is plenty of social and economic injustice today to be bitter about."

In fact, many Scots argue that their national identity suffers, not from chauvinism, but from a lack of pride in being Scottish. That theme was highlighted in author Irvine Welsh's well-regarded novel about Scottish heroin addicts, *Trainspotting*, which also became a hit movie. "We're the most watched, miserable, servile, pathetic trash that was ever thrust into circulation," shouts the main character, Renton. With a parliament of their own sovereignty set to return after 300 years, Scots may soon be able to get past the old-fashioned images of kilts and haggis and modern Scotland and find out whether more political power can change Scottish realities. □

THE STRUGGLE FOR 'PADANIA'

A year ago, northern Italian separatist leader Umberto Bossi won a coalition of three senators to observe Quebec's referendum on separation. The three members of the Northern League came away saying they were inspired by Quebec's "triumphant march towards freedom" using "perfectly legal means." He never mind that the sovereigntyists lost that vote. "For as it was a victory anyway, a lesson in good democracy that would be impossible in Italy," said Giancarlo Pajaroni, self-styled prime minister of the newly declared northern Republic of Padania. "History will continue to move towards the creation of new states."

When Bossi last month declared Padania's "independence" in Venice, critics accused him of plagiarizing word-for-

greater local federalism in his 1997 budget. And a joint commission of the lower and upper houses of parliament began this month to study constitutional reform.

Although Bossi's Northern League has been around since 1986, its rise to power has been spurred in part by plans for a single European currency. Claudio Rivetti, editor of *L'Espresso* magazine, believes Bossi's future will depend on how well the Prodi government imposes an austerity program on the south in order to meet the low-deficit requirements of monetary union. "Italy is cut out of the process of constructing a European currency. Bossi will acquire a temporary favor in the north," says Rivetti.

In last April's national election, the League gained 30 per cent of the northern vote—4 million people. While that was be-



Bossi claims that he plagiarized Quebec sovereigntyists.

word declarations made by Quebec sovereigntyists.

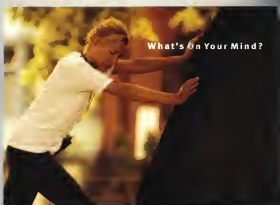
Some Quebecers, though, might wish they had the problems of Italy's wealthy industrial heartland. Many northern Italians complain that they must subsidize the poorer south with hard-earned tax dollars while getting little in return. "Rome has never respected us," says Romeo Mancini, owner of a small textile factory outside Milan that employs 17 people. "There are too many taxes and too many regulations. Small businesses are going bankrupt or taking early retirement."

Bossi's much-typed three-day "March to the Sea" in September attracted about 130,000 people, far short of the "millions" he had predicted, and mostly more than a privacy-loving counter-demonstration in Milan, the north's business capital. And yet, the break Bossi, 55, has prompted a soul-searching debate to debate. While political pundits say Padania in the business daily *Sole 24 Ore*. "Everyone is talking about Padania, a nation that does not exist." Bossi's supporters have also loved Prime Minister Romano Prodi to pledge

fore the League shifted from a moderate stance to secessionism, every new corruption scandal in the capital lends more fuel to Bossi's rants against the "robbers of Rome." During last spring's campaign, Bossi paraded himself as a Lombardy "Benevolet," comparing his quest to that of Scotland's William Wallace against the English as portrayed in the Oscar-winning film. The Italian press took to calling the separatist leader "MacBiossi" and cartoons watched him wearing a kilt.

Despite the jokes, some analysts worry about a fanatic and potentially violent fringe within the party. Magisterial are in-veterating Bossi's "green-shirt" bodyguards, who appear to be modeled on the blackshirts of fascist leader Benito Mussolini. A former justice minister says authorities suspect the group of stockpiling weapons in remote villages and forming an armed militia to fight for independence. Bossi may be down in the polls, but his supporters' moral still cause considerable havoc in the lands led by the River Po.

JOHN PHILLIPS in Venice



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HE ONLY WENT TO CHURCH ONCE

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SUNDAY SUITS OF AN OLD PAIR OF JEANS AND A BRIEF TO MATCH

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World NOTES

A LASHING BY LILI

At least 15 people were killed and thousands driven from their homes as Hurricane Lili ripped through Central America and the Caribbean. The storm took five lives in Nicaragua and four in Costa Rica. A toddler in Nicaragua was killed when his house was swept away. Winds of up to 130 knots lashed Cuba, where President Fidel Castro gave some evacuees shelter at his National Palace, and the Bahamas, where tourists huddled in their hotel rooms.

MARCHING ON KABUL

A new alliance between the ousted Afghan ruler and Taliban fighters has been formed, according to the Taliban spokesman. He says the alliance is a response to the demands of the Afghan people to end the Taliban's rule in Kabul. The alliance demands that the Taliban abandon the Afghan capital, which it captured last month, and join a coalition.

SWISS BANKING SECRETS

Switzerland admitted it had struck a confidential deal with Poland in 1949 to hand over to Warsaw money that Polish officers had failed to claim from Swiss banks after the Second World War. But the Swiss government denied claims by U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato that the pact had let Switzerland keep the riches of Holocaust victims for itself. Last month, Switzerland, bowing to international pressure, set up a commission to track down the lost assets of Jews and others who deposited money in Swiss banks to escape the attention of the Nazis.

STRIKES IN FRANCE

One-third of French public sector workers staged a daylong, nationwide strike to protest government austerity programs and high unemployment. The work stoppages disrupted trains and closures for schools, hospitals, and postal and train services. But it fell short of a similar strike a year ago.

KIDNAPPING TRAGEDY

German police said a body they found in woodland outside Frankfurt at week's end was almost certainly that of kidnapped multimillionaire Anouk Fischer, 40. The victim's family paid a ransom of \$3.5 million, but her kidnappers reneged on an agreement to free her. Most of the ransom was recovered, and police said information from two men in custody led to the body of Fischer, who disappeared on Oct. 1.



People workers and a soccer fan in Guatemala City. This tragedy was preventable.

PAYING WITH THEIR LIVES: Supporters blamed ticket forgery for a soccer stadium stampede that killed 54 people and injured 150 in Guatemala City. "This is a tragedy that could have been prevented," said a growing cry at the city morgue. The disaster occurred when fans without proper tickets stormed a stadium gate an hour before a World Cup qualifying match against Costa Rica. At the time, the 45,000-seat stadium was already overflowing with paying customers and, by some estimate, another 10,000 people with fake tickets. In the resulting crush, many fans tumbled down the stands. Doctors said pressed against a chain-link fence at the edge of the playing field. The disaster was the worst in World Cup history.

Too little, too late for Dole?

With the Nov. 5 election nearing, Republicans, Bob Dole's aides had promised that their candidate would launch his strongest attack yet on President Bill Clinton's most vulnerable area: his personal character and a set of ethics compromises that caused a swirl around the White House. Last week, in their second and final television campaign debate in San Diego, Dole attempted to do just that. He criticized Clinton over the Whitewater scandal, a controversial FBI file on Republicans that surfaced in the White House, and questionable payments to the Democratic party from foreign sources. Americans, said Dole, "are skeptical about on a daily basis. They see

ethical problems in the White House today."

But Clinton did not let himself get drawn in to debating these issues, and there were few significant Dole's barbs on the President's head. Polls showed that, by a 3-1 margin, voters thought Clinton came out ahead. Still, new controversy was mounting over foreign contributions to the Democratic National Committee, including a \$570,000 payment from Indonesia's Lippo Group banking conglomerate. White House officials denied there was any wrongdoing, but Dole made it clear he would tie up his attacks during his campaign's final two weeks. "We're going to get tough," he said. "You haven't seen anything yet."

Anger engulfs Belgium's child-sex probe

A wave of protests and protests swept Belgium after the Supreme Court removed a popular judge who had led the child sex and incest investigation that has gripped the nation. The court ruled that magistrate Jean Marc Coenen had shown bias by attending a fund-raising dinner for faculties of raising children. "This decision is like spitting on the faces of Joke and Melina," said Gino Gansu, the father of Melissa, one of four girls found dead on the properties of convicted rapist Marc Dierckx. Two other girls were rescued alive thanks to the inquiry ordered by Coenen, who had been widely praised as the sole shining light in a discredited justice system.



Investor Firms
Exchange
traders last
week saw
Dogs in
the Street

Prime Minister Jean Chretien—is all the encouragement Finance Minister Martin needs to stay the course. But with the unemployment rate hovering depressingly close to double digits, Opposition parties are demanding not only to boost the economy and create jobs. Last week, Canada's Catholic bishops joined the call for action: criticizing the federal and provincial governments for putting balanced budgets ahead of the needs of people. Chretien sounded a note of sympathy—and raised immediate skepticism among his critics—by telling Winnipeg schoolchildren that he occasionally chats with homeless people about their problems. But the Prime Minister's New Age sensitivity ended at a 500-page Liberal party bid raising dinner in Toronto, where he steadfastly refused to budge on tax cuts. "It's not a boat to sacrifice the glasses we made," Chretien told an audience of 2,500.

Instead, the government is looking to the Bank of Canada to keep the economy growing—and, with luck, the job count, too. Last week, the central bank cut its key lending rate for the 10th time in 17 months, cranking it down to 3.75 per cent—the lowest since July, 1983. The benchmark prime rate of the chartered banks fell in an attempt to bring the cost of borrowing to rates not seen since the 1950s. Another cut is widely expected within the next three months—if the dollar keeps climbing. The rate adjustments last week and earlier in the month were both aimed at getting sluggish consumers spending to compensate for the higher dollar's drag on exports, and, as Gauthier, a senior economist with the Bank of Montreal, notes, the steadily slide in rates over the past 17 months has been a boon to Canadians shopping for a house or about to mortgage their mortgages. But it does not help fans of both income investments like Canada Savings Bonds, which went on sale of lending a modest three per cent return initially (although carrying the promise of rising rates after the first year). Those seeking a bigger bang for their bucks are flocking to the stock market, especially in the form of mutual funds. Canada's \$160-billion fund industry is now attracting more sales, say asset manager investors, who would once have dismissed the stock market as the preserve of pre-striped capitalists and slick high

rollers. Dan Richards, a Toronto-based marketing consultant for the mutual fund industry, calls them "GIC refugees," people who have been lured by low rates to abandon their customary security bias—guaranteed investment certificates. "They're really reluctant investors," says Richards. "They don't want to be in bonds, but there are relatively few alternatives."

It is not unusual for stock markets to soar when interest rates slip, but steady rate cuts have helped bull-racing bull markets that have shattered all previous records. On Bay Street, the TSE 300 stock index "has been hitting all-time highs almost every day," notes Craig Hargit, the manager of index options. And it has been done that on markets no longer in the doldrums of 1982, when the index dropped at about 3,500. By the mid-July crash it closed at 5,492. But Toronto's climb was completely assisted by the sterling performance of the New York Stock Exchange, which burst through the Dow Jones index's 6,000-point milestone this year after hovering 5,000 "for almost unbelievable the way these markets have gone in the past few years," said Ramsey Best, chief market strategist for Richardson Greenleaf of Canada Ltd.

Indeed, the Dow's latest milestone has left many investors wondering if New York's longest bull market in history—almost 2,200 days—is too good to be true. The last record, of course—a total of 2,128 days of steady gains—ended with the Crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression. Predicting the latest bull's ultimate demise has become a favorite parlor game among armchair and sweat-chase traders alike, and it has spawned an impressive array of oilfield theories. Morgan Stanley's McManis, for example, believes the growing popularity of equity in a nation where the market is bloated with money and ready to burst. But dolefuls like John Dill, president of the Canadian Shareowners Association, a nonprofit investors' club based in Windsor, Ont., see no reason why the good times cannot go on indefinitely. Low interest rates, and the baby boom generation's love affair with equity mutual funds, could keep the stock market hopping for years, he argues. "I think we're in unprecedented times," says Dill.

The speculation in anticipation for the majority of Canadians, who do not own stock and are more concerned with such day-to-day matters as finding work or paying off debts. South of the border the average American is only a few weeks from feeling that times are better, according to a recent poll. After three years of declining unemployment, low inflation and moderate growth, a slim majority of those surveyed said they were better off than they were in 1990. Canadians, on the other hand, are nowhere near as confident. Consumer spending, often a gauge of the public mood, is still sluggish—rising only 3.2 per cent in the past two years.

Not everyone is certain that rock-bottom interest rates will spark the buying spree that Ottawa is counting on to accelerate economic growth and create jobs. "I've seen too much fear in people," says Ralph Hocher, a real estate broker in Winnipeg, where the demand for new and used houses remains slow. The only real outlier, suggests the Bank of Montreal's Gauthier, is pushing more people to work and putting more money in their pockets. Because of both unemployment and the resulting surplus of labor, real income growth has been flat or declining for the past six years, he says. "That has been the major impediment to a sustained recovery," adds Gauthier. Until that barrier can be breached, Ottawa will not only face a fiscal deficit, but a deficit of hope. □

The rebound

BY JOHN SCHOFIELD

The economic news flow last and fastest last week and, for once, it all sounded so good: interest rates reached a 35-year low, stock markets and exports hit historic highs and the once-lovely loonie continued its upward flight. Politicians savored their delirium in the ground, while foreign investors whistled with delight. But for all the fanfare, the 5,000 men, women and children who frequent the Mustard Seed food bank in Victoria just weren't enjoying the party. The number of people seeking assistance there has increased 50 per cent since January, says Rev. Tom Oshiro, executive director of the Mustard Seed Street Church, which runs the food bank as the B.C. capital. "There is definitely a climate of frustration and anger out there among the people who are nonconsciously strapped," says Oshiro. "Survival is the key. To survive, they're doing anything."

The shroud, standard expression on the faces of patrons at the Mustard Seed and other overburdened food banks across Canada spelled out the real meaning of the term "yellow economy." As millions

As the economy
keeps rolling,
layoffs keep
growing

of Canadians wait patiently for the rewards of a growing economy, work seems more hard to come by. Last month, employers shed 47,000 jobs, pushing the unemployment rate to 9.9 per cent.

But at the same time, foreign investors and financial markets are growing more enthusiastic about Canada by the day, underpinned by the lack of work, stagnant incomes, and this year's attempt, 1.5-per-cent rate of economic growth. As a result of government backslapping and lower interest rates, the Grosse-Pointe Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development predicted in June that the country's growth rate for 1997 will lead the industrialized world, leaping to 3.5 per cent. On Wall Street, some market watchers believe that, next year, the reboiled Toronto Stock Exchange will actually outperform the stronger New York exchange. "We've got this wonderful guy named Paul Martin, who is taking the deficit for the federal government down, down, down," says Tom McLellan, an equity strategist with Morgan Stanley and Co. in New York City. "And every time he does, the market goes up and takes notice."

Wall Street's collective pat on the back—and solid backing from

Company share
prices soar...

TSE 300 INDEX
(year-end)



... as the cost of
credit sinks

The Prime Interest
Rate (year-end)



Upbeat on the line

Threatened GM workers may keep their jobs

For predicting Canadian auto workers, it was a symbolic gesture. With the strike against General Motors of Canada Ltd. dragging into its third week, trappers fared as a covert GM plant in Oshawa, Ont., when company officials used the facility to hold a meeting, allowing them to discuss workers' concerns and to discuss the company's plans to increase its production capacity for the next few years. In protest, about 300 workers forced out security guards and walked out the doors to the plant. Unknown to them, Canadian Auto Workers president Bruce Hargrove was holding a status conference in a hotel room in Oshawa, Ont., where he met with GM's worldwide chairman Jack Smith in a Toronto hotel room. After two hours of negotiations, they emerged with what appeared to be a potentially strike-ending compromise: the automaker would be able to reduce its costs by purchasing more parts from outside suppliers, but union jobs would be protected even as the company downsized. Hargrove then moved to Oshawa to deliver the news to the strikers, who were still protesting. "There, there is light at the end of the tunnel," Hargrove told them. "We're looking at a 25-year GM car program. There is hope."

The breakthrough at the bargaining table was dramatic. Hargrove had vowed to shut GM down until it agreed to protect about 3,000 union jobs at stake under plan to sell a fabrication plant in Oshawa and a trim plant in Windsor, Ont. GM aims to become more efficient by reducing its manufacturing capacity and purchasing more parts from outside suppliers in its cost-cutting program. The dispute over that outsourcing project prompted walkouts by 20,000 workers from GM plants across southern Ontario and in St. Therese, Que. In the United States and Mexico, GM laid off 33,000 employees who made parts for vehicles assembled in Canada.

Hargrove was forced to breathe a key part of the CAW's bargaining strategy. In the past, the union would concentrate on reaching a deal with one of the Big Three auto makers and the other two would fall into line. But Hargrove indicated that a deal reached with Chrysler Corp. Ltd. in September, under which Chrysler agreed not to cut back its announced workforce, might not be GM's offer all. As a result, analysts specu-

lated that the CAW was going to give GM the flexibility to cut both staff and capacity. Hargrove: "We recognize that they are a different corporation than Chrysler."

In return, said Tracy Wakefield, GM's vice president of public affairs, the automaker would "meet" its employees' needs. David Cole, director of the University of Michigan's Office for the Study of Automotive Transportation, said that likely meant a guarantee that the new owner of any parts plants GM sells off will have to honor the UAW contract. GM and the United Auto Workers reached a similar U.S.



Hargrove: a subtle breakthrough in the negotiations

agreement three years ago involving the sale of parts-making operations in Cleveland. Hargrove told Marissa's that at one point the CAW had reached a comparable deal with GM Canada, but he said GM officials in Detroit killed the plan. "We thought we had a deal," said Hargrove. "But it was pulled off the table at the last minute."

Last week's compromise caught many analysts by surprise. Detroit-based Paul Ballew, chief economist with the labor-market research firm J. D. Powers and Associates, said that since 1993 when GM lost \$11 billion on overcapacity, the company has been trying to shed excess capacity and thousands of workers. It also wanted to intro-

duce a number of redesigned vehicles, including the Chevrolet Malibu, Buick Century and Oldsmobile Cutlass. And with nearly \$12 billion in cash on hand, GM had not been expected by analysts to give in to the CAW. But with the strike threatening to disrupt the supply of new cars, chairman Smith's hand may have been forced. "This strike was very unduly for GM," said Ballew. "Some part of GM's recovery plan involved the new models."

As well, a prolonged strike would have derailed GM's restructuring plan as it was gaining momentum. The company reported third-quarter profit of \$1.37 billion—almost double the amount from the same period last year. General Motors Co. jumped 92 percent to 59th position and Chrysler's stock it also jumped 92 percent to 59th position. Despite GM's profitable surge, analysts noted that the world's biggest auto manufacturer must hardly be flawless. In 1995, while Chrysler's profit as a percentage of revenues set this industry standard at the percent, GM trailed at 1.7 percent.

Even with its strong third-quarter performance, GM has a long way to go. "While GM circa 2000 is a vehicle Chrysler earned \$1,000 a vehicle," said Detroit auto analyst James Mulvihill. "GM is still so far behind it's not even funny."

Against that background, the CAW strike was a major gamble for Hargrove. The U.S. counterpart, UAW president Stephen Fiol, had negotiated three-year pacts with Chrysler and Ford. It wasch had also concluded an agreement with GM that allowed the firm to change union workers—while the CAW was still striking—Hargrove's position would have been undermined. Dale Beckner, a labor economist at Michigan State University, said there were clear advantages to the U.S. union in having the CAW strike first. For one thing, he said, UAW members had all because all the Canadian strike had received almost 30 percent of their pay. As the strike spread in the United States, GM would still be forced to pay the wages of U.S. workers who had been idled by the Canadian strike. He also said the strike could have become a political issue if the UAW had started a first, because it might have emboldened President Bill Clinton's re-election campaign—especially after heavy union donations in that campaign. But those countries were far from the minds of striking CAW members. "When we walked out," said Bill Allen, a technician, "we thought we would be out to Christmas." But for Allen, last week's agreement meant hopes that the celebration may be just around the corner.

TOM FENNELA

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YOUR GUIDE TO SLIDE



Discover
WINTER

A Cure FOR WHAT Ails You

PICTURE THIS

It's the dead of winter. It's cold outside. You are hiding in your living room, dippers on, fire roaring, weather channel tuned in and it's calling for more. The "February Blahs" are falling. You're feeling blue and house-bound and very pale compared with the rosy-cheeked weather people, who actually look as though they're enjoying the season.

We have one message for you!

This is winter folk! It's Canada. It's supposed to be cold. Snow is meant to cover the ground. Grab your skis, a snowboard, and get outside and have some fun!

Besides, ski and snowboard exercise is good for you.

Exercise adds spice to your daily routine. It keeps the stress levels in check, expands your energy reserves, enhances your self-esteem, chases away the blues, and generally puts a fresh spin on things. Exercise clears the mind.

Discover winter. It's a cure for what ails you.



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FIVE EASY STEPS TO DISCOVER SKIING & SNOWBOARDING

1. Turn to our list of areas near you offering Discover Skiing & Snowboarding packages. Page 10
2. Present our Discover Skiing & Snowboarding coupon.
3. Locate the Ski School Desk and sign up for a Discover Skiing or Discover Snowboarding lesson.
4. Let Ski Shop personnel outfit you with the proper rental equipment (skis, boots & poles or snowboards).
5. Ask for a trail map and explore the area. If you need to, ask for advice on riding lifts and locating beginner terrain.

Last year's winter Saturdays started early in the Smith household. They rose at 6:30 a.m. for figure skating lessons. Peter headed for hockey at nine, and Greg couldn't be late for his guitar lesson at 11.

The Smith parents felt as though they were operating a not-for-profit taxi service. And after a winter of running at a pace that would rival Donovan Bailey's 100-metre dash, they opted to throw in the towel.

With a perch prepared to sell a "family weekend" — and a secret plan to reduce their shuttle service — the Smith parents have convinced the kids to try some snow sports. This winter the Smiths will ski and snowboard together.

Some quick research indicated that most ski areas in Canada offer

Discover Skiing and Discover Snowboarding packages that include lift tickets, equipment rentals, and group lessons. The Smiths found one that provided something for everyone: Greg is interested in trying his skateboarding skills on a snowboard, and intends to head for the snowboarding park to do so. Sunny's figure skating background has increased her comfort on skis, and she's signed up for an intermediate group lesson for men. Peter wants to try an intertube on snow, and will spend his days in a special area for tubing.

As for Mom and Dad, a Discover Skiing beginner lesson followed by a caffè latte by the fire and the knowledge that their kids are safe and together is all they can ask for. No more haste. No more 100-metre dash. No more weekends apart. And best of all, no more three-step taxi service.

For the Smiths this winter, it's the one-stop shuttle to snow.

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DISCOVER Carving

There is a revolution going on. And it might make skiing easier.

To the delight of thousands who find skiing a touch too complicated to master, there's a new ski on the market that can accelerate beginners to intermediate and even expert status in unprecedented speeds.

Shaped ski — sometimes called hourglass, super-sidecut or

pambolic ski — exploded on the market only recently and should do for skiers what over-sized racquets did for novice tennis players — shorten the learning curve and increase the fun.

The technology is simple, just as skiing should be. Shaped skis are wide at the tip and tail and narrow in the middle, a design that gives them an hourglass appearance and makes the ski simple to turn. It's goodbye to the clunky, loose skiers get into in beginner and intermediate stages, and hello to graceful, crisp, parallel turns.

LEARN TO CARVE

Shaped skis are putting a strong back into intermediate and advanced skiers' turns as well. In so equipping with this new phenomenon, skiers are one step closer to achieving the "perfect carve" — a

technique snowboarders have been using for years to turn lift riders watching above.

Before buying a pair though, experts suggest testing a set to get the feel. Shaped ski technology is different than the mechanics of traditionally-designed skis, and it takes some getting used to. Rent or test a pair from your local ski shop or ski area, and ask your local ski school for a Discover Carving "shaped ski" lesson.

"Just up those babies up on their edge and feel 'em carve..." — A standard response from shaped ski converts.

In no time you'll be carving trenches in the deep stuff that may just turn lift riders watching above.

**Discover
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SNOWBOARDING- THE *Ultimate* FREE RIDE

It's new, it's cool, it's fun, and it makes its Olympic debut in 1998. In 10 short years, snowboarding has taken the world of winter sports by storm, recording unprecedented growth in Canada and around the globe! By the year 2000, 50 per cent of all snow sport visitors in Canada are expected to be snowboarders!

FUN & FREEDOM

Fun is the key ingredient of any popular sport, and it's the driving force behind snowboarding's soaring popularity. Kids especially are attracted to its unstructured ethos. Eighty per cent of all kids taking up snow sports are either snowboarding or switching to snowboarding by the age of 12. But snowboarding is not just for the under 25 crowd. Growing numbers

of adults are taking up the sport as well because of its exhilarating ride.

The buzz word in snowboarding is "freestyle," which embodies what the sport is all about. More akin to surfing than skiing, snowboarding allows unlimited freedom to ride any snow condition or slope. Wider and shorter than two skis, the snowboard rides high atop the snow, and is very easy to turn. At top speed, carving a turn on a snowboard is an addicting thrill like few others: the body leans close to the snow, the board skids, and the glissade of the turn puts a big smile on your face. In deep powder, the snowboard floats effortlessly over the snow, allowing the rider to arc graceful surf-like turns—the ultimate freestyle!

FAST LEARNING CURVE

With its single board and natural

sideways stance, snowboarding is easy to learn. With lessons, just a few hours is all that it takes for the average novice to master the basics.

RIDING GEAR

Snowboarding gear is simple: board, bindings and boots. Board models are divided into freeriding (trucks), and alpine (freecarving). Boots are available in "hard" style, with a rigid plastic outer shell similar to ski boots, or the lighter, more versatile "soft" style, similar to a snowmobile boot.

GETTING STARTED

The best way to start is with one of the Discover Snowboarding packages – including lift tickets, lesson programs and equipment rentals – offered at most snowboard and ski resorts.

THE SNOWBOARD VACATION

Ask any snowboarder in Japan, Europe, or the USA where they dream of snowboarding, and nine times out of 10 you'll hear CANADA. Canadian snowboard destination resorts are among the best in the world.

Snowboarding is quickly becoming an important part of the Canadian identity, alongside skiing. This winter, discover snowboarding.

The world's economy of Inland Northwest Canada Magazine

Discover
Snowboarding!



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Ross Laver Personal Business Mortgage rate roulette

Another week, another drop in the prime rate. From mortgages to car loans, borrowing costs are falling like autumn leaves. In political circles, the same du jour is the growing clamor for tax breaks to spur consumer spending. But the federal Liberals will have none of it. Why all the fuss about taxes, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien asked in Vancouver last week, when Canadian families can save \$8,000 or \$9,000 a year in many cases simply by reorganizing their incomes at today's mortgage-interest rates?

Unfortunately, the notion that this fall's flurry of interest rate cuts will send Canadians racing back to the shopping malls overflows a rather sizable obstacle. That is, at 5.25 per cent the prime rate is now at its lowest level since 1989. But most homeowners with mortgages are locked into their agreements and face steep penalties—or outright refusal—if they attempt to renegotiate before the end of the term.

Although short-term and variable mortgages have gained slightly in popularity during the 1990s, five-year mortgages still account for 61 per cent of all loans insured under the National Housing Act. First-time buyers in particular—often, young families who would be more likely to spend rather than save any money paid from lower rates—tend to opt for the predictability of longer terms.

By the time many of those loans come due, there's a very real danger that rates will have climbed back up again. Although economic forecasting is a notoriously vexatious science, some analysts are warning that the prime rate could jump as much as 2½ per centage points by the middle of 1997 because of inflation pressures in the United States. And what happens if foreign lenders renounce to the possibility of a separate Quebec? Today's cheap money could easily become tomorrow's leaden masonry.

For people worried about rising rates on low rates, there are several things to keep in mind. First, it's a common misconception that homeowners can wriggle out of their

mortgages at any time by paying three months' interest. That applies only to terms longer than five years and mortgages insured by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. that have passed the three-year mark. In most other cases, borrowers are at the mercy of the lender.

With a CMHC insured mortgage, it's possible—though unlikely—that the interest saved by refinancing is worth the three-month penalty. Another option is to check whether it is possible to extend the term, either by blending the old interest rate with the current rate or by paying an interest rate differential, which compensates the lender for the additional money it would have collected between now and the time the original mortgage was due to expire. If it's possible, but refinancing can make sense if the mortgage doesn't have long to run and the borrower is convinced that rates are about to rise. (Dimes fall, at a time, you'll have said.)

Bear in mind that the mortgage market is now extremely competitive and many institutions will bend over backwards to retain desirable clients. "If you've got other business with the lender, the BSA's and other loans, go in and plead for special treatment," advises Patrick Cloutier, a housing market analyst in Toronto. "If not, tell them you're prepared to transfer that business over to them. Banks are big on relationships these days."

Finally, consumers might want to keep their fingers crossed that Ottawa adopts a Canadian Real Estate Association proposal to incorporate that lenders disclose, up front and in plain language, the prepayment terms available under their mortgages. Another, more controversial, CREA recommendation would force financial institutions to adopt, as a minimum, a standardized formula for calculating early prepayment penalties. Both ideas, now being studied by the Canadian Finance Committee, would encourage borrowers in future to spend more time thinking about their prepayment options—and perhaps haggling for better terms—before signing on the dotted line.



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Business NOTES

COSTLY PRICE WARS

Quebec is proposing a law to help independent gas stations compete with major oil companies. It would bar the large refiners from installing gas at their pumps for less than they charge for fuel sales to independent stations. The move followed a prolonged price war that forced small operators into bankruptcy.

RESISTING A TAKEOVER

A key shareholder in Allstate Capital Corp., Canada's 18th-largest mutual fund firm, filed RBC Dominion Securities Inc. to help fight off a takeover bid by Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. Allstate Capital Corp., owner of 30.6 per cent of Allstate, says Manufacturers' \$655-million offer for the fund is too low. It claims the insurance company helped sourtle a \$746-million offer by Toronto-Dominion Bank for Allstate—as allegiance the company denied.

RAILWAYS MERGE

CSX Corp. of Richmond, Va., has agreed to buy Philadelphia-based Conrail Inc. for \$11.3 billion. A combined CSX and Conrail would create a massive rail network serving the eastern half of the United States, from Chicago and Boston in the north to New Orleans and Miami in the south.

VIRTUAL BANKING

The Bank of Montreal has joined the rush of financial institutions offering so-called virtual banking to its clients. Through a new division called ribana, the bank is offering its customers services: North America's first e-banking computerized programs, including around-the-clock electronic banking over the Internet. Clients will be able to take out loans and even have access to communicate with a personal account manager.

TOBACCO SUITS CLOSER

Layoffs representing more than 24 million Ontario smokers filed an application in Ontario to proceed with a class action suit against the tobacco industry. The suit, alleging that the plaintiffs suffered health problems from smoking, named Imperial Tobacco Ltd., R.J. Rehnoldt Benson & Hedges Inc. and R.J. Rehnoldt Inc. Plaintiffs are seeking \$1 million each in damages and a similar amount for others joining the action.

Disarray weakens a watchdog

Three Securities Commission chairman Bill Walker says the juggling of Ottawa and Quebec's Park to agree on a plan to create a national securities watchdog is creating confusion and threatening the ability of the OSC to do its job. Walker, who steps down on Nov. 1 after three years as commission chairman, laid the blame for the impasse at the feet of both provinces. Finance Minister Ernie Eves and his federal counterpart, Paul Martin. The idea of creating a national regulator was first floated three years ago, and at one point both Ottawa and Ontario agreed to proceed. But since then, Quebec and British Columbia have announced that they would not go along with the plan, and Ottawa and Ontario cannot agree on how to finance the new agency.

Ottawa is insisting that it will receive all revenues from fees charged on securities transactions on the Toronto Stock Exchange, while last year's deal called for 50-50. Martin was unavailable for comment last week on the issue, but a spokesman for Eves said the transfer was waiting for Ottawa to act. "We really want the federal finance minister to table a final offer, so we can all move forward."



Walker disarray has delayed a national watchdog

But Walker said that while the two governments disagree, the OSC is unable to plan or do its job properly. "It's time for him to fish or cut bait," said Walker. "Either we make a good national securities commission or we have the courage to say it does not work."

INVESTING

Bre-X shares take a hit

A little over two years ago, Canadian Bre-X Minerals Ltd. had a rich find of gold in Indonesia, enriched with low claims. PT Kowang Groun, an Indonesian corporate partner

that originally claimed 50 per cent of the deposit, demanded another 20 per cent share, and Indonesia's PT Sungsia (Sun Pordens) claimed 10 per cent. Bre-X president David Wilson said the claims were without merit. But for various reasons, who watched the stock drop from \$1 to \$200 in little more than a year, the dispute

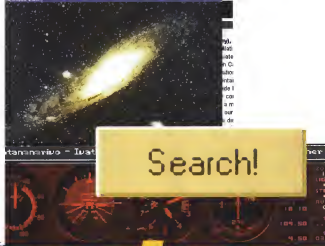
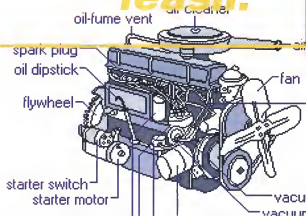
is troubling. Some analysts say Bre-X is being blackmailed. It cannot bring the claims until it receives a license from Indonesian authorities. And that is being held up until British confirm the dispute. Bre-X shares, which sold at 1.0 for a while this year, and from a 1.7-month high of \$30 to \$21.90 on Oct. 18.

Mulroney strikes a deal

Archbishop David's Millard A.C., with former prime minister Brian Mulroney negotiating on behalf of the great American food and drink corporation, resolved a price-dispute case with the U.S. justice department by paying recent losses. The company, based in Detroit, is supposed to a buy of 266 million to settle a charge of fixing prices for lysine, a feed additive for livestock, and 849 million in connection with wine, oil, a food and beverage additive. The massive fine was the largest ever in a criminal antitrust action, but some analysts asserted it will have only a minimal financial impact on the company. But two of ADM's top executives, Terence Wilson and Michael Andrus, could still face criminal charges. Analysts, however,

say that situation might have been even worse had Mulroney not had a hand in negotiating what some will see as a favorable deal for the company. They also say he is playing a role in the company's attempts to put the controversy behind it. "Brian Mulroney is an important agent for change," said John McMillin, an analyst at Prudential Securities Research in New York. "He has done a good job for shareholders."

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Peter C. Newman

Soothing noises from the virtual banker

The Bank of Montreal's Matthew Barrett has always stood out among Canada's bank chiefs as the one most willing to debunk the mythology that still surrounds his industry. Last week, by suggesting an imaginative virtual banking system called *ambank*, he finally provided a cure for those Canadians who still feel uncomfortable when dealing with banks.

Stephen Leacock, the witty economist who became president of Canada's best-known staple firm, made his reputation with the essay "My Financial Career." It described his disastrous dealings with banks, creating the art of being distrustful of bankers almost as a religious ritual. That certainly is very much less true today, but with new electronic banking like the BMO system, it's not going to be true at all.

"We're moving from a reactive, routine, processing type of relationship to a much more proactive, value-added kind of partnership, and it's the new technology that has allowed us to do that," insists Barrett. "What will be a new popular dimension in banking, giving customers unlimited electronic access to the Montreal services, around-the-clock, 365 days a year."

The innovative move is part of Barrett's crusade to get ahead of his competitors. "What's not widely understood," he told me in a Vancouver interview earlier last week, "is that this is a fiercely competitive industry, with almost everybody wanting to eat our lunch. The restructuring phenomenon that has shored up the manufacturing industries is about to engulf the service sector, worldwide." Barrett anticipates the industry will not only to meet his bank ahead at the other Big Five, but to show that Canada's financial services industries can be globally competitive and become one of the country's strategic assets in world trade. "We're going to see an absolute free-for-all," Barrett predicts, "because adding the physical bricks and mortar that was traditionally the barrier to entry and expansion in banking is disappearing before our eyes, and available technology is taking its place."

While all of Canada's chartered banks appear the world as their playground, Barrett is obsessed by the idea of turning the Montreal into a North American bank that happens to have its headquarters in Canada. The bank's main U.S. subsidiary, Chicago's Harris Bank, earlier this year acquired the 54-branch Household Bank, giving the combined operation 140 branches in the American Midwest. At the same time, the Montreal purchased a 16-percent interest in Grupo Financiero Banamex, Mexico's second largest bank, holding company. The Canadian bank already accounts for 840 billion of the Bank's \$201 billion in assets, and at least 20 percent of its 1995 profits to date. Barrett expects that within the decade, 60 percent of his bank's revenues and two-thirds of its profits will

be earned outside Canada. "We want to be the NAFTA bank, serving a single, unified market," says he.

"What I'm increasingly concerned about," he adds, "is that the possibility of being considered best in class may be eroded by the concentration Canadians that banks are too big. I don't know what 'being too big' means in today's global context. We must, as a people, and more self-confidence, start believing in ourselves, start to understand that we're as good in many areas, including financial services, as anybody in the world. Even if we're a wealthy country, we're a little country at heart, so that in order to prosper we must be able to compete on the global stage with the behemoth institutions that dominate the much larger economies. Those are the public policy debates I'd like to see instead of all the in-house bank bashing."

The bank bashing has been fuelled by the record-breaking performances of Canada's financial institutions. BMO itself earned after-tax profits of \$677 million for the first three quarters of 1995, and the size of Barrett's take-home pay packet was more than \$1 million in 1995. "I have a lot of trouble understanding this notion that somehow big business is bad and small business is good," he says. "To my way of thinking, a big business produces a product or service that satisfies millions of people, while a small business has a few customers. So, why should it be socially bad to be doing something that delivers value to large groups?" Barrett adds with the subtle Irish wink that is his trademark. "What we really have to be careful about is building a small business by starting off with a big one."

Like other bank chairmen, Barrett is torn between the desire to grow the bank by increasing returns and tighter stocks on bank profits. "If I took the capital my shareholders have invested," he says, "closed down the bank and invested the money in risk-free bonds, we'd still make \$840 million. So, what management is paid for is the difference between that amount and the profit we make by running a business. And while I'm happy to tell my board all directions that we're terrific, it really isn't an extraordinary feat to produce \$1 billion from \$100 million of \$100 million."

He points out that out of every \$100 million in profit, half of it goes for taxes and another 20 percent is spent on dividends for shareholders, while the other \$30 million is reinvested in the bank to launch programs like last week's *ambank* scheme. "So if you damage the bank's profit flow," he points out, "you're not damaging some mythical five or six rich guys driving up the bank profits in some imaginary Bay Street basement, but you're hurting the customers, usually represented by the institutional investors."

Barrett's mission is to persuade Canadians that if our economies of scale can't make us a great nation, an enlightened view of global perspectives might. He is determined to make the Bank of Montreal a leader in that quest.



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CASHING OUT

COVER

BY MARCI McDONALD

In an airy showroom, stuffed with designer sofas and beds, a 38-year-old brunette with a headless sense of chic was orchestrating a private ritzy. A calculator in one hand, guidebooks for Central America in the other, Singhan Oh was plotting her escape from a life that, until only four months ago, had seemed utterly charmed. Even the Karsens-Burn Song, as friends and clients called her, thought she had it all—the Toronto townhouse, the BMW, and a husband, jazz guitarist Rob Carroll, who pitched in on day care duties for eighteen-year-old Grace and Jackson, 5, making possible her career. For more than a decade, she had reigned as the style queen of the city's trendy Queen Street West, where she counted Thomson star Boris Beale and publisher Louise Drayton among the regulars who flocked to her thriving boutique, 290 km

Then on June 30, a scandal delivered a lawyer's letter. Without warning, her new landlord announced that he had rented the premises to an American sunglasses chain and she had eight weeks to get out. "I was in shock, I couldn't talk," she says. "I'd been there 12 years, I'd put all my money and creativity into it and I'd helped put Queen Street on the map. It was a kind of betrayal." A doctor prescribed Prozac, but the problem reached well beyond her mood. She had already bought her hill here, leaving her with \$200,000 in stock—no plus for a woman who was her family's chief breadwinner. Still, when offers of other locations flooded in, she found herself downgrading. The eviction had ended one chapter, her creative existence. "I put in 19-hour days and I thought it was really worth it," she says. "You work so hard to buy food, yet I threw half of it out. I was always running behind my lifestyle just to catch up." This month, having rented out

their house and scraped together \$20,000 in savings, she and Carroll are packing up their family to spend a year on Bixton, an island off the coast of Honduras, where she is determined to start painting for the first time since she graduated from art college 14 years ago. They chose that obscure location because they knew it would be cheap. "We have to downshift absolutely everything," she says. "But if I have

to grow my own vegetables and catch my own fish, I'll do it."

Now, an entrepreneur on her soft gray totes of their own endowments, she has discovered that dropping out of fashion has placed her squarely on the cutting edge of trendiness. Across the continent, millions are increasingly overextended and economically insecure middle class are getting the brakes on the treadmill of getting and spending—many of them in a quest for spiritual resources and authenticity in their lives. Burnt out by 60-hour work weeks and what B.C. columnist Bruce O'Brien terms the TINS syndrome—Two Incomes, No Sex—they are questioning the often absurd trade-offs in the fast lane of the big city and big business. Suddenly the excitement of the Highway is out, along with Rolex and Gucci, fragility and fleeing to the boardwalks are in. "A lot of people," says Oh, "are looking for a simpler, meaningful life."

Some call it downsizing. Others have dubbed it voluntary simplicity, a lifestyle option that sets them apart from the growing army of the downcast and dispossessed who have come to the movement not by choice but by necessity. Indeed, as newscasters report the litany of continuing mass layoffs—46,000 in C-

forestry jobs to be eliminated over the next decade, 25,000 bank and 85,000 civil service posts targeted to slash—these casualties can comfort themselves with the thought that their valiant attempts to cope are being hailed as the hip social philosophy of the future. "I have a sense that a lot of people's securities and employment insurance benefits are running out now," says Wendy Armstrong, former general manager of the Alberta chapter of the Consumers' Association of Canada. "Before they were saying, 'Something will come up.' Now they're saying, 'We can't go on this way and maybe the whole purpose of life is not to acquire possessions.'"

In her current best-selling bulletin on mass-market behavior, *Chasing*, New York City's Faith Popcorn demonstrates the distinctions between the desires of the voluntary and involuntary poor. Putting her own interpretation on the subject, she christened it "Cashing out"—"out of boring jobs, bad neighborhoods and, most of all, out of a corporate mind-set that doesn't appreciate creative risks, spiritual loyalty and human demonstrable will to help us survive."

But whatever its name or form—whether provoked by a per-

Thousands of Canadians are downsizing out of the fast lane, choosing to live a simpler life

sonal epiphany or a corporate pink slip—there seems little doubt. Not in America is increasing numbers are rebelling against a lifestyle of overwork and overconsumption, putting their rusted-out credit cards on hold and cutting back in ways both small and large. Last year, the Merck Family Fund, a private Maryland philanthropy founded by the heirs to one of the world's largest pharmaceutical fortunes, made headlines around the world with a study of U.S. attitudes to materialism called "You want less, but won't." In it, 82 per cent of respondents declared that most Americans bought far more than they needed. 62 per cent reported that they wanted to downshift and 28 per cent claimed they had already begun the process. Shortly afterward, a Royal Bank survey of consumer spending confirmed that shift. Conducted by the Toronto polling firm, Ipsos-Research Group, it reported that Canadians would rather invest in their retirement savings plans or children's education than splurge on lifestyle items other than vacations. "People who have money to spend are spending it on the future—paying down their mortgages or putting it in RRSPs," says Susan O'Hall, an analyst of her firm's research last fall. "A Toronto retail consultant told me, 'I can't tell you how much money I've sucked away in my kids' in their account.'"

Others among the financially challenged are flocking to the suddenly chic second-hand shops springing up across the country or signing up for local barter schemes. In Calgary, Candace Connors, 30, took her job as a maternity hospital receptionist three years ago when she gave birth to her son, Coleston. "My husband and I took a vow of poverty," she says, "because we don't believe in day care." Now, the \$20,000 a year they live on from his work as a house painter has been supplemented by a flurry of unimagined laurels, all acquired through the year-old Bow Classic Barter Net-

Scanning Oh
(right) I put in 19-hour days and I thought it was really worth it?"

work. Advertising her skills as a portrait photographer in the network bulletin. Connolly has earned enough Hanes, the official (low-Chinese) currency, to buy cases of wine and a pair of china cabinets. "This month," she says, "I'm looking for a dentist who wants some pretty pictures on his wall." Meanwhile, after downshifters are decamping to the country where the living is cheaper and they can set up their own business in the basement or some backlot room with a view. In the process, they are rethinking not only the work place and the consumer marketplace, but even the landscape itself.

"No question about it, we have never seen a trend as hot as this one," says Gerald Celente, president of the Toronto Research Institute based in Rosedale, N.Y., who estimates that 25 per cent of the country's 9.8 million baby boomers will be generating voluntary sustainability by the year 2000—and at night Celente seems it all merely as a pendulum of spending habits, but a fundamental transformation of values. "This is a really a sea change of thought," he says, "whereby you suddenly perceive you have a greater purpose in life than material gain." Agrees Stephanie Cooper of EnVivo: "Now it's socially acceptable to simplify your life."

Even in the corridors of commerce, the rallying cries to downshifting are difficult to resist. On the streets of the current issue of *New Horizons* chronicles the joys of "Chucking it" while the cover of *Star Reader* exhort parents to "Just quit!" At The Book Company in Calgary's Bankers Hall, titles like *Leaving the Single Life* by reporter Santa Barbara Reid estate agent Elaine St. Jacques are regularly staged on by the store's part-timed clerk. And for the past seven months—ever since Oprah Winfrey declared it had changed her life—the sleeper at the top of best-seller lists has been *Simple Abundance*, a paean in praise of shopping avoidance by Washington writer Sarah Ban Breathnach. In this might sound familiar to the generation that survived the Depression. "All you have is all you need."

"Simplify, simplify" urged Harry David Thoreau in *Walden* more than a century and a half ago. "Our life is frittered away by detail." In fact, voluntary simplicity is trendy a most new. Legendary downshifters from Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi have long preached the same sentiment and message. As Gerald Celente points out, "Austrian monks practised this up until the end of the Second World War. Then this burst of economic prosperity unleashed the consumer society. Politicians were encouraging people to go out and spend to help the economy." While the Sixties counterculture there was fueling rebellion into specialism, a period short-lived within two decades, one of its key rebel commanders, Jerry Rubin, had returned phased into a Manhattan nightclub. "It's not that the baby boomers lost their values," agrees Celente, who, at 48, ought to know. "They just got diverted along the way."

Now, if money is the Me Generation have been prodded back to the basics by manifestations of their own mortality or the spectre of environmental breakdowns, as he suggests, there have been force-marched in that direction by an unprecedented

economic flu. Over the past five years, average after-tax family income has fallen by \$800—from \$43,000 to \$42,200—while personal debt has soared to record levels. Last year, the average Canadian owed \$16,000. Meanwhile, the personal savings rate—traditionally high in Canada—was at its lowest in 25 years. "There's a lot of research, both psychological and economic, that shows consumers resist any permanent reduction in spending," says Robert Kerton, a professor of economics at the University of Waterloo in Ontario. "What's happening now is that people are feeling squeezed."

Still, five years ago, when retail sales began to plummet, most consumer experts dismissed it as yet another cyclical lull. "Initially, we were lurching back by the economic indicators," admits Susan O'Dell. "We thought it was because everybody was being downgraded. But it wasn't because customers weren't angry about cutting back, they were embracing it, saying, 'This is the way things should be.' As discount and warehouse outlets changed the suburban mallspace, not only the financially disadvantaged showed up, so too did the droves of upscale boutiques. 'I don't know how many parties I've been to where they serve the Price Club catalogues,' O'Dell sighs.

Increasingly, downshifters are taking the rural route out of the rat race

"Instead of saying, 'I won't buy it unless people can tell it's from Holt Renfrew,' the new co-ownership is, 'I just it cheap.' It's a shifting of pride and prestige."

In Seattle—home of that movement to excess, the gourmet cappuccino bar—voluntary simplicity has spawned a virtual industry. More than 200 study circles have sprung up, inspired by the 1990 best-seller *Year Simple or Year Life* by local authors Vicki Robin and Joe Dominguez, the latter a sometime *Wall Street* analyst who retired at 35 to live on \$8,000 a year. There too, former lawyer and reformed "kitchen appliance addict" Janet Laker publishes her four-year-old quarterly, *Simple Living*, which promotes tips and working opportunities such as the recent ad in the *Personal*



Elizabeth and Charles Lang; Hannah and Glass, daughter Sara (left); freedom

magazine, she explained, she'd have to work harder to pay for it, and be away from you more," she recalls. "Now, they don't talk about it any more."

Of Laker's 4,500 subscribers, nearly a quarter are Canadians, including Patricia Johnston, a self-employed Victoria career counsellor who with a partner offers downshifting workshops. Once a business, at 54, Johnston is beginning her own trade-ins. Recently her workshops in a four-day work, she cooperates for the drop in income by cut owning a TV, boycotting her dishwasher and burning her laundry on the line to dry. But having her skills as a shoddier, she insists, is not the point. "I'm not into self-help," she says. "What I'm trying to do is work less as I can spend time in my garden or swimming and volunteering—those things that feed our soul and spirit."

As that quest for balance has spread up the West Coast, one of the first to make was therapist Bruce O'Hara. "It's slower catching on up here," O'Hara concedes, "but Canadians have been slightly less over-the-top in terms of their consumption." In his own practice, he saw a paucity of clients, half his clients were stressed from overwork, the other half were questioning about their unemployment. To O'Hara, who wrote *Working Smaller And Working Three* years ago, the solution seemed clear: job-sharing through a voluntary four-day week. Now, taking only three days a week himself, he has become the leading proponent of that movement from a per-

column which began, "Seeking tall, attractive, pretty pinching female." Laker was wrestling with routine \$6,000 monthly credit card bills when she noticed that her two children were amassing themselves, not with their expensive toys, but by rolling rocks down hills. "I thought, 'Why can't I do that?'" she says. In fact, much of her advice comes out of her own experience. When her kids asked about her \$2,500 used Toyota station wagon, she explained, "I'd have to work harder to pay for it, and be away from you more," she recalls. "Now, they don't talk about it any more."

Inspired by the Robin story, they sold their house, bought a 2800-sq-ft motor home complete with computers and a fax, and set out across the country with their dog, Bacon, in search of the ideal haven. Four months and nearly 20,000 miles later, they doubled back from Newfoundland to New Brunswick, where, for a third of their former home's price, they bought a handsome Cape Cod house with a steep hill slopes down to a swimming pool. In his book *Simple Abundance*, there, from the database they built on their odyssey, they run Townscape Information Services Inc., which published a guidebook last year and will launch a Web site on the Internet later this month, to help others like themselves scout the prospects in small town Canada. "Just the response to the Robin story is not me thinking," Gaudy says, "that there must be a lot of people like us who wanted out of the big city."

In fact, as downshifting in growing numbers are taking the rural route out of the rat race, he and Chambers are tapping into a wide demographic base branded the Great Population Turnaround. For the first time in a century, censuses reveal that the continent is witnessing a reverse migration from the cities and suburbs to the once-scarce countryside. In a 1991 book called *Peoples: Where Real Estate Will Boom After the Crash of Suburbia*, former University of Washington demographer Jack Lowenstein predicted that within two decades half the continent's population will have moved

naïve setting—the one-story house he built on Denham Island, near Georgetown, where his sailboat precedes the buy before that. But providing work-alonging across the country, he has encountered opposition not only from corporations, who complain the scheme would double their payments, but also from workers themselves. Recently hired by a major bank, which had offered its staff 14-hour days in a four-day week, O'Hara discovered that employees were already getting in that many hours five days a week—and branding it "voluntary overtime." As he points out, "In this climate, people are afraid to risk anything in case they lose their job." Still, he tries to shock his audience into simplifying their schedules with an arresting statistic: "The average dancer couple spends a grand total of 12 minutes a day talking to each other."

Dwayne Chambers and Mark Gaudy were in their separate cars, caught in Vancouver's rush-

founded 14 years ago by a former engineer named Michael Lusin at Conterline, B.C. At a time when the region's real estate and logging industries had collapsed, Larkin saw that the town still harbored the same seeds and needs. "It became clear to me," he says, "that the only thing we were missing was money." Creating an alternative currency in what he dubbed "green dollars"—convertible promissory notes backed by a central computerized accounting system and accepted only within the local community—he launched a scheme that has now spread to a dozen communities across the country and nearly 3,000 others through the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

In Toronto, one of its most enthusiastic members is 61-year-old

COVER

novelist Jay Kogawa, who also cross-legged on the boulevard of her 26th-floor loftmost view. Reverting to her roots in L2 System Group, which sells a system of modular, her incoherence and a line of books, she earned enough credit for a lawsuit, the mean pathfinder she sported and a garage for her car. This fall, she is working with friends to launch a new twist on the spirit in Vancouver, where she spends half the year. Under its proposed design, companies will be able to donate goods or services to a non-profit organization, which in turn can sell them off in return for cash contributions. For Kogawa, who works her first novel, *Obasan*, on the conceptual propeller she is asked out of company wide basis, the spirit promises a new economic ethic. "I got involved as part of my spiritual journey," she says. "I thought it had a tremendous potential to help people feel hopeful and think of possible employment to avoid of crisis."

Still, at its heart, voluntary simplicity is profoundly modest, questioning the very foundations of the consumer culture that has shaped the postwar world view. No one is more aware of that than Peter Taylor, executive director at the Merck Family Fund, who helped put the trend on the media map. Last January, under the umbrella of her frankly named Centre for a New American Dream, she assembled a gathering of environmentalists, including Bill Linn, the founder of Vancouver's *Abolition* magazine, which is devoted to slowing the estimate of 30,000 new housing units each year. Facing ways to redefine cultural values, they pondered no computer race to give humans in new palatations. Called "Take back the holidays," its aim would be to incorporate traditional trees, Hanukkah

Satirical warfare on ads

One slick advertisement features that hip veteran of tobacco commercials, Joe Camel, decked out in a hospital gown on a cancer ward and rechristened "Joe Cherns." Another shows a cigarette of the type you'd find in a pack with a cancer spread. By the way, "Quit the serial killer," gives the old type "No, it's the dog? Little Nancy? Wrong. It's the little red reader." Both spots are the handwork of Ad-busters, a glossy Vancouver quarterly devoted to tackling hype and hypocrisy in the \$170-billion continental advertising industry. While others in the downgrading movement dispute the merits on thrill, documentary filmmaker Katie Lavin, 54, and his tiny staff of *Generation X*ers are its shock troops, attacking what he calls "the command centre of the consumer culture" with sly wit and outright subversion. Ironically, that chairman has won them prizes in *The New York Times* and *The West Coast Journal*, and even a cult following on Madison Avenue. Says Lavin: "They want to see what the enemy is up to."

In Ad-busters' latest "de-marketing" campaign, he urges readers to celebrate the ultimate expression of voluntary simplicity: *Buy Nothing Day*, a 24-hour moratorium on consumerism. Scheduled for Nov. 29, the first shopping day after American Thanksgiving—and, historically, the busiest one-day buying binge of the year—it will kick off the Christmas spending season with the media. "Participate by not participating," says Lavin. "If you look at what's wrong in the world, it all starts with overconsumption."

Born in Ontario during the Second World War, Lavin grew up in the enforced frugality of displaced person camps in Germany and Australia before moving to Japan as a marketing expert. But after emigrating to British Columbia in 1970, he was galvanised by the symptoms of ecological devastation. "Consumers," he says, "is the root of all environmental problems." In 1988, when Lavin and a small band of fellow greens attempted to undercut a brutal TV campaign promoting logging by British Columbia's Council of Forest Industries, they discovered no restriction would allow them to buy time for their 30-second parody. "We were really upset by this lack of democracy on the airwaves," he says. His solution: "a slick subversive little magazine

dedicated to fighting the pollution of the mental environment." Run by his nonprofit Media Foundation and financed largely by its \$5.75 cover price, *Abolition* now sells 30,000 copies in its issue—20,000 at them in the United States.

Agency copywriters, Lavin says, are the only people who can afford to be so bold. One issue exposed the "Greens" stickers to plaster over McDonald's outlets across the conti-



Bill Linn, a 24-hour magazine on consumerism

nent, sparking the arrest of a Toronto vegetarian activist, Chris Berlin. And Linn is currently battling *Cher's* magazine over its apparent refusal to sell him a \$15,000 page for the Joe Cherns "advertisement," as he calls it.

But it is downgrading because the latest consumer trend, Lavin finds that he and his magazine have obtained respectability. Last year, he was invited to a U.N. forum on sustainable consumption. "Everybody knows we're being beyond our means, both individually and as a society," he says. Still, he predicts that it will take at least a generation for the majority of continental consumers to seriously downsize. That, it turns out, is how long it took Lavin himself to quit smoking.

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People

Edited by
BARBARA WICKENS



Moore: 'trying to manage multiple roles'

Caught in a crunch

Juggling family life with a busy career is nothing new for Miki Moore, a media entrepreneur who raised two children while hosting radio and television shows and writing magazine and newspaper columns. "The heart of the working family issue is trying to manage multiple roles," says Moore. "Two years ago, Moore decided to create a television series focusing on the work/family crunch, joining forces with executive producer and fellow working mother Carol Huxley. Moore created *Double Duty*, a weekly series being shown on WTN and Vision TV. Each episode spotlights solutions of real-life Canadians involving family, community, business and government. "We want to inspire and motivate people because children are our future," says Moore. "If we do not raise them right, where will we be?"

Two solitudes, then and now

When Quebec filmmaker Charles Binard agreed to direct *Marguerite Yoland*, a romantic romance about a young French-Canadian woman who falls in love with a British army officer in the aftermath of the British conquest of New France, he was determined to make the \$1.1-million production as historically authentic as possible. After a futile search throughout North America for a leading male who could speak continental French and had a good British accent, Binard turned to



Sapich: 'you could feel the tension on the set'

London's West End theatre district. He cast British stage actor Michael Sapich—who learned French from his French-speaking Polish father and English mother who was born and raised in France—as Capt. James Elliot Chase. Sapich, 29, says that filming the 13-part series—now being shown on Radio Canada's April Dec. 5—during last year's Quebec referendum campaign provided an unsettling element of realism. "You could just feel the tension on the set the moment we got into costume."

BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST—Quebec's Rocky Riders of the World



MISS ANNIE OAKLEY
THE PEPPERLESS LADY

Stoneyrith (left),
Bobby (above),
Dana (right) 'where
when we needed her'

Glenbow-Alberta Institute in Calgary to the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Tex., says the concept has become a powerful symbol of liberation for many North American women. Adds Savage: "She has shown here there when we needed her most."



At home on the range

Natural history writer Candace Savage shared the ambition of many little girls as she grew up in the 1950s—to be a cowgirl. Having never been closer to a horse than one on a merry-go-round, however, the Saskatoon-based Savage says she eventually realized her goal was not very practical. Still, the image of the "rocks! boots! dancin'" crossing with the real and the gender lines stayed with her, so she set out to discover the reality behind such Hollywood creations as Dolle Evans. In her book, *Cowgirls*, Savage uses photos and historical images to show them in all their glory. They range from rough-and-ready cowboys to TV and movie stars like Audie Murphy, to TV and movie stars like Barbara Stanwyck, who was so fearless in performing her own stunts that the Blackfoot Indians she worked with on one film named her Princess Mary Victoria. Savage, whose research took her from the

Life after Cirque de Soleil

Montreal composer René Dupéré is used to taking risks. In 1981, he quit his job of 13 years as a high school music teacher to take risks with a troupe of street performers, *Fantôme*. After it moved in 1984 into Cirque de Soleil, Dupéré was among the performers who went to a Los Angeles theatre festival—without enough money to get home. "It had to work," he says. Cirque de Soleil, in fact, went on to become a huge success and as the composer for five of the circus's productions, Dupéré has garnered international fame and accolades. The CD *Alagna* alone, for instance, has sold more than 300,000 copies. But at age 50, Dupéré decided it was again time for a challenge and to let his partner, singer Anne Welle set out in July, 1995, on their own. The result is the recently released CD *Welle*, an evocative blend of ethnic and classical music on which Welle sings in English, French and Spanish. Says Dupéré: "It is never too late to start something new if you feel that it is right."

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THE ULTIMATE DRIVING EXPERIENCE.

Undiplomatic service

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON

When an artist applies for public money, there are no guarantees. Bruce Verrina had been around long enough to know that, but he thought he had a shot. Last year, the 45-year-old artist-director was cast reviews for his production of *My Father's House*, an adaptation of author Spide Fraser's disturbing account of childhood incest abuse. After unsuccessful runs at Toronto's Fort Centre, he had

been steadily eroded by severe spending cuts. As a result, Quebec artists are often in a better position to take their shows on the road. According to Robert Hughes, director-general of *Assault's* international and cultural relations bureau, performers in other provinces often "haven't got the critical mass necessary for travelling any more, so they're coming to us less for tapping us."

After a successful run at Toronto's Fort Centre, he had first offers to mount 10 performances in four U.S. cities on the West Coast. Ottawa's foreign affairs department gives out \$4.6 million a year to support artists touring outside the country. And Verrina was asking for \$380,000, expecting to raise another \$62,000 privately. After submitting his application, he waited three months for a reply. By the time he found out that his request had been rejected, he was upset enough to ask some pointed questions. "Tell me, who did get the money?" he demanded. When he finally got an answer, he was shocked: all six theatre groups awarded travel grants were based in Quebec.

Verrina's experience points up a striking disparity in Foreign Affairs arts funding. During the 1995-1996 fiscal year, of the \$2.6 million in touring grants that Foreign Affairs handed out to the visual and performing arts, 31.7 million—almost two-thirds—went to Quebec-based projects. In the current year, about 40 per cent of performing arts grants have gone to Quebec. That imbalance—exacerbated by the fact that the three department officials overseeing grants to the visual arts, performing arts and publishing all happen to be francophones—has led to allegations of favoritism. Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy acknowledged in *Maclean's* last week that there has been a problem and said the system of grant allocation was being changed. "That there is some good reason for [the existing situation]," he said. "There seems to be more applications in the performing arts from Quebec."

Aside from the issue of deliberate bias, the biased funding underscores a growing cultural gap dividing Canada, while Quebec's cultural infrastructure thrives—in large part because of unforgiving provincial support—the arts in the English-speaking provinces

have been steadily eroded by severe spending cuts. As a result, Quebec artists are often in a better position to take their shows on the road. According to Robert Hughes, director-general of *Assault's* international and cultural relations bureau, performers in other provinces often "haven't got the critical mass necessary for travelling any more, so they're coming to us less for tapping us."

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every event in Hagarty last year, Foreign Affairs declined its support. "What was particularly telling," he recalls, "was that my hosts were told that if they wanted to invite me, Quebec writers they could easily be backfilled."

Hughes disputes the veracity of Coleman's story. And current figures show that Foreign Affairs has not untably favored Quebec authors, unlike performing artists. Still, the department has a reputation for political meddling in the arts. Last spring, controversy swirled around Belles Lettres, a celebration of English-Canadian literature in France. The organization's decision to drop author Mordecai Richler from the guest list caused widespread speculation that French Canadian diplomats had intervened because of his propensity to hostility to Quebec separatists.

Greg Gatenby, artistic director of Toronto's International Festival of Authors, says there is "a clear prejudice in favor of French-Canadian artists at Foreign Affairs. But the core problem is at the top. The mandarins are not interested in the arts, and culture is just the marionette of trade." Adds Gatenby: "Canada wants to support trade to the Pacific Rim, so Foreign Affairs says, 'Hey Greg, have you thought of bringing a writer in from Indonesia?'"

Even artists who are well treated by the department privately question its practices. "It does feel like it's a far door," said one touring artist, who asked Maclean's not to use his name for fear of losing department support. "The idea is to keep on the good side of these people, because there doesn't seem to be any kind of accounting."

For artists accustomed to arm-length funding agencies such as The Canada Council and Telefilm, the department's attitude to artists can be puzzling. "The behavior at Foreign Affairs is extremely strange," says Penny Dickson, executive director of The Writers' Union. "There are no guidelines. The arts community is used to dealing with guidelines, with peer assessment. There needs to be some professionalism."

Verrina's experience has one study of one artist's frustration with an opaque bureaucracy. It started last year when he began filing a labyrinthine, 40-page grant application, itinerary and budget. Verrina submitted the application by the Sept. 30 deadline, including it with mailing endorsements from Senator Keith Dwyer and former Liberal food minister Roshni Roshni. The application form promised a reply in early November.

Verrina waited. He sent his phone calls and a fax went unanswered. He finally received his rejection in January. The letter



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BOOKS

Laxer looks for the Left

IN SEARCH OF A NEW LEFT

By James Laxer

(Fishing News, 252 pages, \$29.95)

James Laxer is blunt about the dismal state of contemporary social democratic parties. "In the postwar decades, social democrats were seen as pointing the way to the future, today they have lost their compass," he writes in his new book, *In Search of a New Left*, an overview of the past 60 years of the CCF-NDP in Canada. To his credit, Laxer, a political scientist at York University in Toronto, situates the story of Canadian social democracy within a global context.

There has been a general decline in the appeal of the left internationally as an era defined by fiscal crisis, globalized capitalism and neo-conservative orthodoxy. Even when social democratic governments have come to power, as in Chile in the early 1990s, they have not usually fared well. Unable to argue for the high levels of state expenditure of an earlier period or to set out clear alternatives to the prevailing orthodoxy of neo-conservatism, the NDP increasingly finds itself on the ropes.

But what way forward, if any, does Laxer offer out of the sorry state? Unfortunately, none. Instead, he summons up a new breed of "left" movements, scholars, feminists, gay and lesbian activists, advocates of the cultural community, those in the Canadian nationalist tradition, aboriginal activists, environmentalists and left-wing intellectuals. But he fails to ask himself the hard question of just what these disparate movements and activists share with one another. The identity politics that some of these groups advocate do not have much to do with the economic or political concerns of the others. Nor can some kind of vague cultural politics replace the shared solidarity—irrespective of gender or color or sexual orientation—that was the hallmark of an earlier left movement. Laxer is insufficiently attentive to such pressing issues as the impact of new information technologies or the rapidly changing

nature of work. Nor does he pay attention to recent changes in European social democratic thinking, particularly within the British Labour Party of Tony Blair. Laxer is excessively preoccupied with strictly Canadian solutions to Canada's problems—a reflection, presumably because of his own involvement in the nationalistic Mifflin movement of the NDP of the late 1980s. Yet NAFTA is here to stay. And the globalisation of capital requires that the Canadian left—just like its Western European counterparts here—must—begin to think and act more internationally as well.

The author agrees correctly that the left is



Anti-poor demonstration in Ottawa's Parliament Hill. Laxer argues that the left has to evolve—or die.

historically the party of equality. But there is no automatic preference for equality over such values as liberty or individual rights in the Canadian body politic. And the left will need to do a lot of rethinking, especially in its economic arguments, if it hopes to recapture the intellectual high ground from the right. It is worth remembering that 50 years ago, economic liberals like Friedrich von Hayek or Milton Friedman were voices preaching in the wilderness. But, eventually, their ideas carried the day during the neo-conservative upsurge of the late 1970s.

The challenge for the left, Canadian and international, is of the same order of magnitude. Laxer's book is a reasonable account of where the Canadian left—or more correctly the English-Canadian left—has come from. But it does little to prepare the groundwork for the bold intellectual step that will be required to make the left relevant again in the 21st century.

PHILIP RESNICK

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Films

Tales of men undone

Hollywood is an industry of happy endings. It specializes in escapists' tales of characters overcoming the odds. But for those who would rather escape to places so dark that their own lives seem sunny by comparison, there are new movies offer an alternative. *Sleepers*, *Blueprint* and *Jude* are about men overcome by the odds. The first two are tragedies of lost innocence, true stories set in a cruel and unyielding New York City. *Jude* takes place in 19th-century England, in the cruel and unforgiving landscape of novelist Thomas Hardy's imagination.

Sleepers is another tale of male bonding from American director Barry Levinson (*Shower*, *Three Men*, *Jaggy*). And he has assembled a heavyweight cast that includes Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, Brad Pitt and Kevin Spacey. Levinson based his script for *Sleepers* on the 1995 best-seller by Lawrence Sanders, which the author claims is a slightly fictionalized account of his own experience—although some critics have questioned its veracity. The story follows the misadventures of four boys who grew up in the Manhattan ghetto known as Hell's Kitchen during the 1920s. Lorenzo, Michael, Tommy and John enjoy an idyllic childhood of mischief—diving into the Hudson River, pecking at naked women, dancing in an open bar hydrant—until a prank against a boy vendor backfires and lands them in serious trouble.

The four are sent to a reformatory, where they suffer horrifying torture and sexual abuse from a sadistic guard named Nokes (Bacon). Fifteen years later, two of the gang, Tommy and John (Gibby Cradap and Ron Eldard) are back in Hell's Kitchen, addicted to drugs and working as hit men, when they recognize Nokes in a restaurant. They shoot him dead, avenging every moment of revenge. But later, when they are charged with murder, a Hell's Kitchen underground—operating with a clock-and-die-gate intrigue worthy of the French Resistance—plots to save them.

Michael (Brad Pitt), who has become an

assistant district attorney since leaving the reformatory, arranges to act as dummy prosecutor in a trial cleverly rigged to acquit the killers. To help him, he enlists Lorenzo (Jason Patric), who is now a newspaper reporter. And to foreshadow the scheme they recruit a Mafia elder (Vittorio Gassman), an alcoholic defence lawyer (Hoffman) and the boys' childhood friend and protector—a streetwise priest coolly played by De Niro.



Pit (LMD), Patric: male bonding, and revenge, in *Sleepers*

The film's dramatic style—powered by a wordy narration from Lorenzo—seems deeply derivative of Martin Scorsese's *GoodFellas*. But Levinson's vision lacks both the nuance and the moral rigour of Scorsese. And there is a woman at the centre of the narrative—Lorenzo's character seems gay and fiction, which is odd considering that he represents the author's own voice. On the edges, however, are some fabulous moments of character. For example, as the elegant mobster, Gassman makes a scintillatingly sardonic godfather. As the shambling portly lawyer who befriends his way through the trial, Hoffman is wonderfully deft and despairing. And De Niro, whose character holds the first trump card in the intrigue, delivers one of his most lucid, least-mannered performances in years.

Another movie that romanticizes American vigilante justice, *Sleepers* has a guilty whiff to it—it is distressing to hear the blood-thirsty cheer from the audience as Nokes is killed. Levinson, meanwhile, has taken tragedy with Hollywood toughness. His "American" seems much less real than, say, the British of *The Day of St. Vincent* (1990), the CBC movie about institutional child

CALLING ALL HONORABLE CANADIANS



Maclean's 17th annual Honor Roll of 12 Goodies will appear in the December 23 issue, on sale December 16. Readers are invited to submit nominations with testimonials of 50 words or less. To be honored, candidates must be Canadian citizens whose contribution to the life of the nation in 1996 is worthy of special recognition.

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Maclean's

FILMS

alone. Still, Levenon knows how to make a movie. He keeps it compelling throughout and although it runs 2 1/2 hours, *Stepen of* has no room for fatigue.

Basquiat dramatizes the last few years of a New York graffiti artist who catapulted from obscurity to become the first black superstar of the art world. Discovered in 1980 at the age of 20, Jean-Michel Basquiat died of a drug overdose just eight years later. His friend Julian Schnabel—painter, sculptor and now novelist (*Baroque*)—has written and directed a subjective and affectionate portrait of the artist.

Three *Award*-winning stage actor Jeffrey Wright (*Angels in America*) makes a charismatic splash in the title role. He plays Basquiat as a charming free spirit, a person with a just-says vulnerability that affords no protection from the perils of celebrity. Schnabel surrounds his star with a rugged gallery of supporting players—Christopher Walken, Dennis Hopper, Willem Dafoe and Courtney Love. Walken, playing a journalist, inserts all one of his scintillating single-sentence musings. And David Bowie offers a delightful impersonation of Andy Warhol. The movie has the quality of collage. Held together by a rich sexual track, the story feels tangential, confusing and incomplete—like Basquiat's life. But Schnabel captures his friend's spirit with some exquisite brush strokes.

Jude is masterfully rendered. Its beautifully blank canvas of the English country gale could not be farther from the maddening crowd and profit jungle of Manhattan. Based on Thomas Hardy's 1895 novel (*Jude the Obscure*), the film tracks the underbelly of a slow-motion novel. Jude (Christopher Eccleston) who aspires to be a scholar. After the failure of an unhappy marriage to Anabella (Rachel Griffiths), a pig farmer's daughter, he falls in love with his lovely and urban cousin Sue (Kate Winslet)—writing an ill-fated person that continues to smolder with disastrous consequences, even after she marries his boyhood assistant, a teacher named Phillotson (Liam Cunningham).

British director Michael Winterbottom captures Hardy's fatalism with stark haunting images. Shooting in northern England and Scotland instead of Hardy's "Wessex" (the now controlled county of Dorset), he films a world of dark stone, cold green and heavy rain. As Jude, the scrappy contender outclassed by Fate, Eccleston gives a sharply contoured performance. And Winslet displays a sexy boldness and depth that were only hinted at in *Sense and Sensibility*. Thomas Hardy, meanwhile, can still teach New York a thing or two about unrequited love, frustrated ambition and the fine art of slowly descending into hell.

BRIAN D. JOHNSON

Sunday

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Allan Fotheringham

In search of Bill Clinton in ole Little Rock

Harry Long, the great demagogue who was governor of Louisiana back around 1930, once said—believe it or not—*“There may be smarter politicians than me, but they don’t live in Louisiana.”*

I like that. There went an honest man. He knew his limitations but, even better, he knew his strengths. You’ve got to look at a man’s roots to know his soul. Bill Clinton, who will be re-elected as president of the most powerful country on earth on Nov. 5, sharpened his skills in Little Rock, Arkansas. You have to look at Little Rock.

In the five dining rooms in the best hotel in town, the Capital, there is a card on each table. It reads: “NOTICE TO OUR GUESTS: Arkansas Noddy Beverage Control Division states that: All alcoholic beverages must be removed from the table no later than 30 p.m. on Sundays.” Sorry for any inconvenience. It’s the Law?

There it is. The Bible Belt atmosphere—which has produced the current president since, well, since Jack Kennedy, who just happened to be Bill Clinton’s boyfriend here. What goes around comes around.

Arkansas sits down here, trapped by Missouri to the north, Tennessee and Mississippi to the east, Louisiana and Texas to the south, Oklahoma to the west. The state, beyond Arkansas River, which rises far north in Colorado, cuts through Little Rock and its bluffs before joining the fringing Mississippi on its journey down to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico.

The explorer Marquette was here in 1673, when it was called Arkansas. By the time La Salle got here in 1686, it was Acadia. When a British called Cane arrived in 1763, it was Marazion. When Schreinerham hit the area in 1813, it was Arkansas.

By 1820, the population of Little Rock was composed of 12 men. The first settlement, the Eagle, arrived in 1822. By 1853, a total of 217 stragglers headed in eight directions. Arkansas became a state in 1836, which would make it somewhat older than a country called Canada.

On Sunday afternoon in the Capital bar, the good old boys gather. You can tell, from the beer bellies and the embarrassed lack of sleep, that they are undoubtedly former varsity football players for the University



of Arkansas Razorbacks—otherwise known as “the Hogs.” The team’s exploits on the TV screen in the corner of the screen, naturally, are the main-baiting celebration.

It’s the culture ritual. Not for gold, these babies. They escape their wives by passing off each other at the bar, retelling the same hilarious stories of their long-lost youth. As they wiggle up, before Jackoff their, they pull out rubber wild boar masks and slip them on place over their real faces. It’s men’s Y’lids time. The Hogs are men.

At the Cafe Saint Martin—fabled Red Branch in Arkansas—the menu offers the deadly Meat from Heaven and Eggs from Satan.

You want cheap alcohol, we got you cheap alcohol. In the Saturday morning market, a dozen red roses are \$2.00, two dozen for \$2.00.

At the Arkansas State Fair—“Party Till the Cows Come Home”—the yellow school buses stretch out the horizon. A sign: “Wild Horses, Do Not Pet.” Redneck bulls stretch their tails in the next pen.

In the Arts and Crafts building, there is a long lineup. Women, a man or two, a boy or two, are submitting their pens, colors, pins, jems and ribbons for serious consideration by the judges. The living creations of sweat and aspiration stretch from table to endless table.

Clearly the winner, according to this amateur color expert, is “Goose Fat.” —a billiard green collection featuring a snail figure of an angler standing over a small pool of water in which are seven long two day, like, additly. You want baking prints, we got baking prints.

Rebecca Blumstein, wife of the owner of the very substantial and sport-filled Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, says, “You remember you are thing I am the only woman that would be true. She was 12 years old, raised in a Mississippi town 30 km miles from the great man’s home at Oxford, where he was hated by the locals he admired.”

He was 80 and she would encounter him, drunk, at church each Sunday. Pauline, being consistent, continued the tradition that every American winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature—with the exception of one—was an alcoholic. The exception was Isaac Bashevis Singer. Jewish authors learn how to drink.

The state capital building in little ole Little Rock, a monument to concrete, is in fact modeled on Washington’s magnificent dome. The only difference is that the U.S. Capitol’s cup is made of steel, so that when bad poore down it destroys the carcasses of six elderly senators who have to flee to their offices for Jack Daniels relief.

The Capital Hotel, as mentioned, is a casino. An antebellum entrance with tall Greek columns. A lobby of stained glass with a replica of the capital buildings in the center—very much reminiscent of the Howard Johnson in Delaware rekindled in Paris. And remember, get the plunk off the table by 10 p.m. on Sunday.

All this had to do with the making of Bill Clinton. He’s a confusing person. This is a confusing town.

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